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**COURSE OF SERMONS,**

PREACHED AT

GREAT SAINT MARY'S CHURCH,

Before the University of Cambridge,

DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL, 1816.

BY THE

**REV. WILLIAM SHARPE, A.M.**

CHAPLAIN OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

THE SECOND EDITION,

WITH

**AN APPENDIX.**

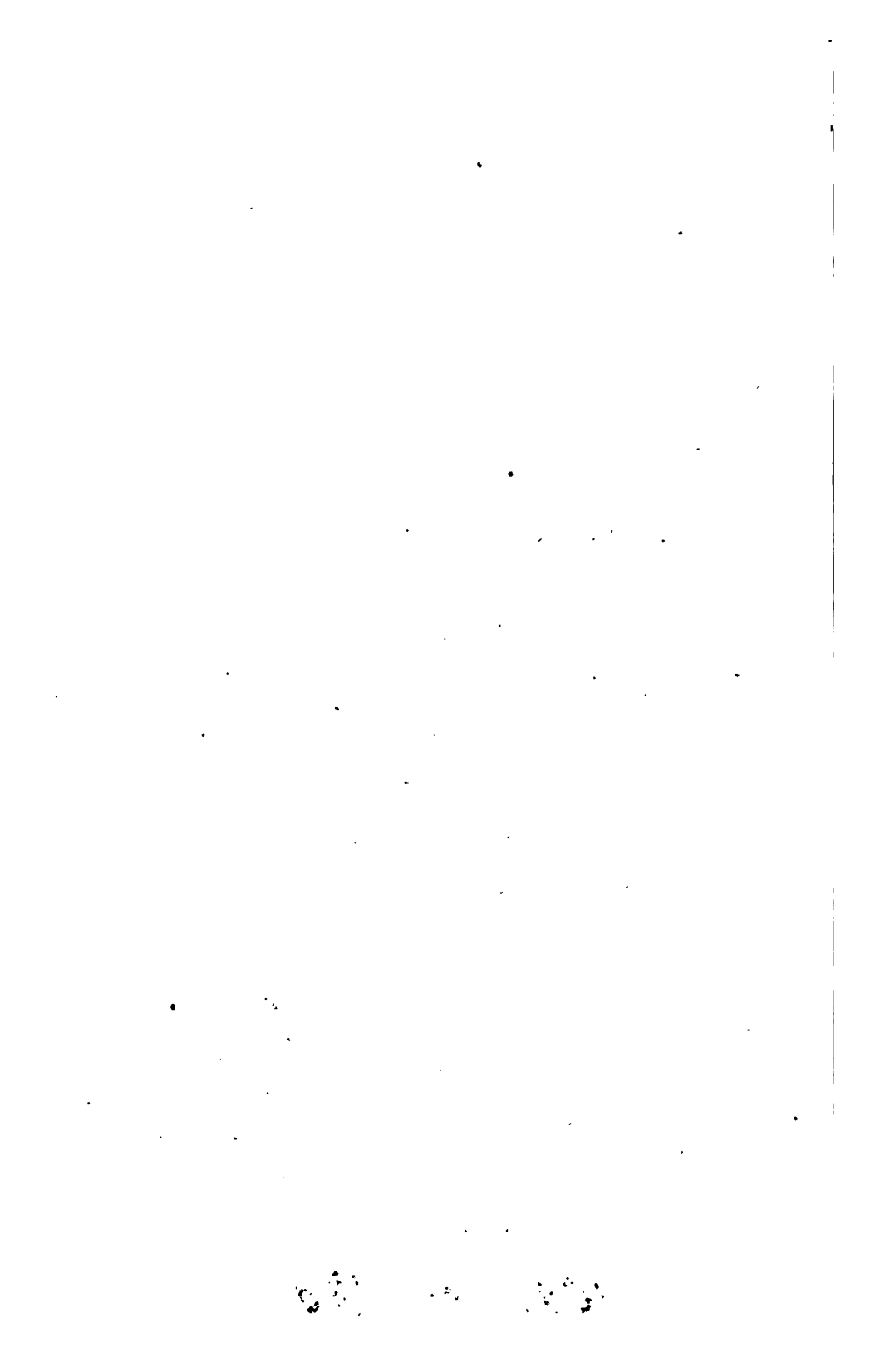


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## INTRODUCTION.

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**T**HE author of the following Sermons thinks it may be right to preface them by a few explanatory remarks, now that he has been induced to lay them before the public.

It was originally far from his intention to enter upon controversy in the course of Sermons, which he had the honour of being appointed to preach lately before the University, but, on hearing the discourses of the first of the Select Preachers of the present year, it appeared to him that they ought not to pass entirely unnoticed; and, as he understood the matter was not likely to be taken up in a higher quarter,\* he himself resolved to offer some observations on certain doctrines, for the support of which those discourses were composed. He is not ignorant in what a difficult and delicate situation he has placed himself by undertaking to comment on writings, which have not been published; but, as he is conscious of no wilful intention to misrepresent, so has he good reason to believe that in the present instance no charges can be brought against him on that score. The truth is, he was so forcibly struck with many passages of those sermons, that he could not forbear taking the earliest opportunity, after he heard them, of expressing their sense, and, (as nearly as he could,) their words, in writing, and it is on those cotemporary notes that he has grounded all his remarks, which relate to the Rev. C. Simeon.

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\* To prevent the allusion contained in this sentence from being misunderstood, (which it probably may be out of the University,) it may be right to add, that the Margaret Professor of Divinity, (now Bishop of Landaff,) was to preach before the University during the following month, and that the author had been informed he did not intend to make any remarks on Mr. Simeon's sermons.

The circumstance, then, just mentioned first suggested to the author the subject of the ensuing sermons, but their design is of a much more general nature than to combat the sentiments of any single individual, however respectable in himself, or however powerful in his influence over others. They contain an examination of the principal discriminating opinions of that large class of the members of our Church, who profess to hold the doctrines of the Gospel in a greater degree of purity than the rest of their brethren; the tenets, commonly called *evangelical*, are here submitted to the tests of reason and of Scripture.

The chief motive, which engaged the author in his present bold, and, perhaps hazardous, enterprize, is explained in the last of his sermons; which are now published in compliance with the wishes of some of those, with a particular view to whose benefit they were written. The few alterations, which have been made in them since they were preached, are, for the most part, merely verbal; but one sentence has been wholly omitted, because it comprized a quotation, which the author has since seen reason to think that he had not applied in the *exact* sense, which its context seems to impose upon it.

Should this publication be the means of producing others in confutation of the principles advanced in it, the author considers himself under no *obligation* to reply to them, for he has acted merely on the defensive side; nor has he either leisure or inclination for such an indefinite kind of employment as literary, and especially, theological controversy. At the same time, however, that he pledges himself to nothing, he, of course, reserves to himself the *right* of vindicating his sentiments, if he should feel the disposition, and have the opportunity, of exercising it.

*Trinity College, Cambridge.*  
*May 24th, 1816.*

# SERMON I.

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## On Original Sin.

### PART I.

PREACHED on SUNDAY, APRIL 7.

JOB 36. xxiv.

*Remember that thou magnify his work.*

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WHOEVER would desire to be nourished to eternal life by the sincere milk of the word of God, must approach the sacred fountain, from which it flows, with the spirit of a new-born babe; when he takes into his hand the holy volume he must dismiss from his heart all its favourite prepossessions, and look up to heaven for light and knowledge with the single-mindedness of the converted apostle, when, regardless of his own inclinations, he made the earnest enquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"\* To a neglect of these necessary precautions for perusing the Scriptures with advantage, is to be attributed, in a great degree, that diversity of opinion on religious subjects which has so long disturbed and distracted the Church of Christ, and has set at variance, not only the different constituent members of the catholic Church, but also the different individuals of particular Churches. And happy

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\* Acts 9. vi.



would it be for that religious society, to which *we* professedly belong, if it could plead an exemption from this wide-spread calamity, but it is in vain to dissemble or deny that even at the present moment, when angry nations have sheathed the sword of war, yet *spiritual* peace is far from our borders. A discussion of some of the leading points in controversy between those two great parties, into which the members of our establishment are now fairly divisible, provided it be conducted with candour and moderation, will be so far from necessarily aggravating the evils which we have all so much reason to lament, that, the more those opinions are sifted and canvassed, the greater probability is there of discovering which side is really in possession of the truth. Such an investigation will be still farther desirable for the important purpose of restoring concord and amity, if the result of it has a tendency to shew that even in the doctrines, which are at present the subject of the warmest debate between us, each side has more principles in common than are easily perceived, or willingly allowed by either, in the heat and rapidity of argument. It is in the humble hope of doing something towards producing a conviction of this kind, that we propose, in our present discourse and those which will succeed it, to consider the principal articles of faith, respecting which a difference of opinion either exists, or is supposed to exist, between ourselves and those who lay an *exclusive* claim to the title of Ministers of the Gospel; but perhaps it may appear in the end that they have encamped at a distance from us without a sufficient cause—that they have often combated only with *imaginary* enemies—and that they disagree with us, not so much as to the nature of the doctrines in question, as in the extent to which they carry them, the terms in which they state them, and the practical use which they make of them.

The words of the text may serve to introduce to our notice one of those contested doctrines, and one also of primary importance. “Remember,” (said one of Job’s reprovers, in a discourse designed to vindicate the ways of God to man,) “remember that thou magnify his work.” This admonition

conveys a precept, which, as it is of universal obligation, so neither is it hard to be understood, or difficult to be practised; on a mind capable of the least reflection or observation the subject here referred to must sometimes irresistibly force itself; the magnificence of nature in its general relations, and the superb luxuriance of its particular details, will frequently fix and rivet the attention, and fill the heart with sublime conceptions, and loosen the tongue to a song of pious thanksgiving; for on each and all of the works of nature are engraved, in characters universally intelligible, the power and goodness of their Almighty Creator. Some, however, there are who appear to themselves to have discovered a most singular exception to the *general* excellence of the works of God—a striking anomaly in creation—a perfect contrast between the qualities and characteristics of beings derived from one common origin, the fiat of the Author of the universe. What is still more remarkable, they have detected this strong contrariety where we should least of all have expected to find it, for while they admit that other creatures, both animate and inanimate, continue to be, what they were at first pronounced to be, “*very good*,”\* entirely adapted to answer the end of their existence, and indeed actually and actively promoting that end,—they contend that man, the lord of this lower world, to whom all things beside were put in subjection,† is himself so *completely* subjected to the power of innate corruption, that he is not only indisposed to do the will of his Maker, but that he has an absolute aversion to all that is spiritually good, and is wholly inclined to all manner of evil; nay farther, that, in his natural state, his very perceptions and notions of religion are not only inadequate, but altogether fallacious; that he is under a strong delusion, involved in mental blindness, and totally incapable even of

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\* Gen. 1. xxxi.

† The dominion over all the inferior beings, originally granted to man at the Creation, was not only confirmed but extended after the Deluge. Compare Gen. 1. xvi. with 9. ii, iii.

conceiving a religious thought, either agreeable to the nature of things, or acceptable in the sight of God.\*

The doctrine of Original Sin, when pushed to such an extremity as this, we believe to be highly erroneous, and fraught with consequences lamentably pernicious ; but, before we proceed to give our reasons for thinking so, it may be advisable to state the true and only sense, in which we apprehend that doctrine *can* be understood, in conformity with the evidence both of Scripture and of fact.

Whoever takes even a transient view of the condition of the world around him, or listens to the suggestions of his own heart, must be constrained to acknowledge that, if man was created in Original Righteousness, with a disposition, that is, to devote all his powers both of body and mind to the service of God, he is, as our Church expresses it, "very far gone" from that state, and now possesses, and has possessed immemorially, propensities, which either are in themselves, or may easily become, the fruitful occasions of sin. Now, though the Scriptures no where inform us in *direct* and *positive* terms, that our nature is corrupted in consequence of Adam's transgression, yet, from the history of the Fall, which is given by the sacred historian, combined with the knowledge we have of our own nature, it is plain that we must really ascribe to that cause some, at least, of the propensities to sin, which are actually inherent in us. For, in the first place, such is our moral constitution that every wilful act of transgression disposes the mind, and thus facilitates and prepares the way, for the *future* commission of sin, and not only sin of a like kind, but sin universally and of every description ; and, as there is no reason for supposing that Adam's nature was in this respect different from our own, we must infer that sin produced a similar effect in *him* : that when he deliberately violated the law of his Maker by the indulgence of appetite in opposition to the

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\* Such was the representation given by Mr. Simeon in his late course of sermons before the University.

dictates of reason and conscience, he thereby destroyed that due equilibrium and accurate adjustment, between the moral and sensual affections, with which, no doubt, he was at first created. And farther—experience abundantly testifies that, according to the physical laws by which mankind increase and multiply, they transmit to their posterity, not only a corporeal but also a mental and moral likeness of themselves, the latter indeed much more frequently than the former; and hence *Adam* too would convey to his descendants a mind frail and defective in the same manner as his own, that is to say, a mind, in which passion had acquired an unjust ascendancy over reason.\* We allow then that the mind of man is so far corrupted; (and partly too in consequence of the first transgression,) that it is not by nature subject to the law of God; that its affections are continually inciting to actions contrary to that law; that those affections, when approved by the will, become then, and then only, *truly* and *properly sin*; and that such an acquiescence and approval justly subject the guilty offender to the wrath and indignation of God; or, to express the same sentiment in the words of an apostle, “that every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed; that, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”† In this sense, and to this extent, we willingly

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\* The *degree* of original corruption here admitted is quite sufficient to account for the wickedness which really prevails in the world; for considering, on the one hand, that the sensual appetite in man is the strongest part of his nature, and that his *first* impulse is to gratify it, whether right or wrong, and remembering, on the other, that he is continually conversant with objects calculated to excite his passions, it is plain that we need look no farther for a reason why so many are to be found in the last stage of depravity, and why the generality are so much more attentive to the things of this life than of the next.

† James 1. xiv.—xv.

admit, for we firmly believe, that man is a fallen creature ; but we strenuously deny that he has fallen, like Lucifer, from the heights of heaven, to the very lowest pit of moral degradation, and darkness, and depravity.

They, however, who maintain that extravagant extension of the doctrine of original corruption, which represents man to be, (what some of the earlier advocates of this doctrine have not scrupled to call him,) the very counterpart of Satan himself,\* were probably induced to frame such an hypothesis with a view of magnifying the grace and mercy of God ; not considering that such an unfounded theory, so far from exalting the character of the Almighty, actually robs him of some of the principal and essential attributes of divinity.

For first, this doctrine is utterly at variance with the supposition that God is a God of *justice*. To be convinced of the truth of this proposition, it need only be remembered that, according to the system against which we are now contending, man is born into the world in a state of such total and radical corruption, that he is not only incapable of performing his duty, but even of comprehending wherein that duty consists ; that he is under the curse of eternal damnation, and yet unable to do any thing whatever to flee from the wrath to come ; he cannot pray to God for assistance, nor even if the Holy Spirit should put into his mind good desires, has he the smallest power of assenting to or entertaining them ; for such petition or such acquiescence would be of the nature of virtuous actions, and virtuous actions, both one and all, the least as well as the greatest, are, by the very supposition, completely beyond his ability to perform. Hence therefore if a human being be ever rescued from such a perilous condition, it must

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\* Verba Hildershami sunt hæc : “ Adamus sibi ac posteris suis accepit imaginem Satanae, in eamque mutatus est. Hincque factum, quod omnes naturâ, (horribile quidem auditu, sed tamen verum est,) quàm maximè diabolo similes simus.”—Sed verò ejusmodi corruptio nec cum S. Scripturâ, nec cum rectâ ratione conciliari potest.

*Limborch Theolog. Christ. lib. 3. cap. 4. sect. 3.*

be by the mere will and arbitrary agency of God we say that his first deliverance from such a state, his first reception into a state of grace, must be effected, in the truest and highest sense of the words, altogether independently of himself, of his own works or thoughts, exertions or inclinations; for on this hypothesis no one can possess any more than another the "single eye,"\* and the "honest heart,"† supposed and commended by our blessed Lord, but all are equally the bond-slaves of Satan, and are just as likely to obtain their liberty, whether they are delighted with the badges of their servitude, and profess themselves willing captives, or whether they are incessantly labouring to burst the fetters, whose iron hath entered deep into their soul.

Now let us suppose the other alternative, and put the case of those who live and die in their sins. And how are *they* chargeable with the cause of such a dreadful calamity? they were condemned before they were born—they were totally unable to help themselves all their life long—the only arm, which *could* have plucked them from the burning was so far shortened that it *did* not save, and who was then the *real* Author of their final and eternal perdition? We leave you to infer, for we should shudder to declare.

It appears then that the principles, which we have been tracing into their consequences, introduce in their train, by natural and necessary connexion, the tremendous doctrines of absolute predestination, of private and personal election and reprobation. We are not ignorant indeed that the advocates of the opinions we are opposing reject these, and similar deductions from them, with the utmost aversion and disgust; but they are to be reminded that the laws of reasoning do *not* allow them the liberty of adopting such a summary course of proceeding; they are either bound to shew the fallacy of the argument by which these conclusions are derived, or, if they are allowed to be legitimately deduced, they and the hypothesis must go *together*—they must be *both* admitted or *both* rejected.

\* Luke xi. 34.

† Luke viii. 15.

—But, besides denying the consequences which we attribute to their doctrines, and we think fairly, our opponents on this head have made certain assertions of their own in relation to the subject now under discussion, which appear perfectly astonishing and incomprehensible; for they tell us that the total depravity of man's heart, his innate aversion to all that is good, his invincible propensity to all that is evil, is so far from being any extenuation of his wickedness in neglecting to obey the will of God, that it is an actual aggravation of his guilt in the estimation of the Almighty.\* Surely from such an assumption one might have expected an influence diametrically *opposite*; surely in an earthly court of justice a natural incapacity of performing any action would be at once admitted as a sufficient and satisfactory plea for the omission of it. And “shall man be more just than God;” shall human tribunals be guided by principles of equity, “and shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

A solution of the difficulties arising out of the doctrine of man's total corruption, as it bears on the attribute of divine justice, has indeed been attempted, but on grounds altogether paradoxical; it will moreover increase our wonder to hear from whom such a defence of untenable principles has proceeded, for it was no other than the illustrious Pascal, who, by way of obviating these and other objections to the Calvinistic account of the Fall of man, gravely asserted that God's justice is not like ours.† It would be easy to shew that

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\* Mr. Simeon, as above.

† “It is most astonishing to reflect that of all mysteries, that which seems to be farthest removed from our discovery and apprehension, I mean the transmission of Original Sin, should yet be so necessary a point of knowledge as that without it we must remain utter strangers to ourselves. For 'tis beyond doubt that nothing appears so shocking to our reason as that the transgression of the first man should derive a guilt on those who, being so vastly distant from the fountain, seem incapable of sharing in the impure tincture. This transfusion is looked upon by us not only as impossible,

this proposition involves, in the very terms of it, a manifest contradiction and absurdity, but we rather prefer demonstrating its falsehood by a direct reference to Scripture itself. By the prophet Ezekiel \* then the Almighty makes the following appeal to his people: "Ye say, "The way of the Lord is not equal." Hear now, O house of Israel. Is not my way equal, are not your ways unequal?" That rebellious house had been complaining that God's moral government of the world was not conducted according to the rules of equity, on which he condescends to lay before them a minute account of the nature and principles of his dealings with mankind, and then invites them to determine, by their own reason and common sense, whether his proceedings were equitable or not, But how could he and they have reasoned together at all, unless upon principles common to them *both*; and how could that justice, which was denied on the one hand, ever be proved on the other, unless each of the parties engaged in the discussion had affixed the same meaning to the *term* justice? And farther, the nature and contents of that explanation of his conduct, which God was pleased in this instance to impart to

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but as unjust could we suppose it to be possible; for what can be more *repugnant to the rules of our miserable justice*, than to doom to eternal ruin an infant without will or choice, for an offence which shews so little probability of affecting him, as to have been committed six thousand years before his existence in the world? Certainly nothing strikes our judgement with more harshness and violence than such a doctrine. And yet without this incomprehensible mystery we are ourselves incomprehensible to our own minds."—*Pascal's Thoughts*, chap. 3.

It is but justice however to add, that the "Thoughts" of Pascal were principally written towards the end of his life, after he had contracted a sort of religious hypochondriacism by a total abstraction from the world, and an incessant practice of the most rigorous austerities, when his constitution was already exceedingly debilitated by severe and protracted illness.

\* Ezekiel xviii. 25.



his people, will place the point in question beyond the reach of contradiction, for the description which it gives of the divine dispensations, as they regard both the righteous and the wicked, is perfectly consonant to *our* notions of justice, when it is the most exalted, and the most perfect.

It must be here remarked that the consequences we have attributed to the opinion of the total depravity of the human heart, do not attach themselves to the doctrine of man's corruption, when understood in that lower sense, in which we conceive it is stated in Scripture, and corroborated by fact; for it is perfectly consistent with *that* doctrine to believe that, though the imaginations and feelings of the mind of man are perpetually inciting him to transgress the law of God, yet that there is also afforded, for the sake of Christ, to every individual child of Adam such an uniform and abiding portion of divine grace, as will enable all, who are so disposed, to bridle appetite, to overcome temptation, to turn to God, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. This opinion too is confirmed by Scripture, many passages of which concur in proving that the beneficial effects of Christ's meritorious death have extended, in *some* degree, and for *some* purposes, to all mankind;\* and certainly if *any* such effects are general, that, which we are now considering, must be included in the number, for it is of all others the most wanted, as a necessary preliminary both to present and future happiness, and it is one which the justice and goodness of God would undoubtedly incline him to bestow. At all events the existence of such a moral faculty in man, however to be accounted for,—whether it is to be considered as one of his mental endowments which escaped the ravages of the Fall, or as arising from a new principle of holiness and obedience infused into him afterwards by divine grace;—whatever, we say, be its *origin*, its *existence* is necessarily implied in all those exhortations of Scripture which are addressed to the unbelieving and the

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\* See especially Rom. 5. xv.—xviii. and 1 Tim. 4. x.

wicked. And such a power, thus universally imparted, of attaining to the knowledge and practice of his duty, we may call one of the *natural* powers of man, with the same propriety, and for the same reason, that we so denominate his intellectual capacities, for these latter are, as to their primary cause, just as much the offspring of God as any of the influences of divine grace; mental and moral faculties are equally emanations from his own all-perfect essence, and are equally diffused by him through the wide range of rational creation, to enlighten every man that cometh into the world, and “to guide his feet into the ways of peace.”

To return.—The opinion of the entire corruption of the human soul, inconsistent as it is with divine justice, is nevertheless, if possible, still more derogatory to the *goodness* of God; for on this supposition we must imagine that the Deity has peopled this world of ours with a set of rational creatures, endowed with the fullest conceptions and capacities of happiness, and for no other purpose than to make the great majority of them miserable; creatures, destined to be the constant sport and prey of a host of raging, untameable, diabolical passions; and of whom they, who are not picked and culled out of the general lot by an arbitrary decree of the divine mind, are to be consigned to future punishment, beyond thought and without end. Does this accord with the character of him, whose Spirit has declared that he has “no pleasure in the death of him that dieth,”\* and that, “his tender-mercies are over all his works?”†

Lastly, let us advert to the *practical* effects, which this doctrine has a manifest tendency to produce. It destroys then, in the first place, that proper degree of respect for himself which every one naturally feels, and which is one of the strongest safeguards of innocence and integrity that can exist independently of religious considerations; for a convert to these opinions must necessarily think that he has neither

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\* Ezek. 18. xxxii.

† Ps. 145. ix.

innocence nor integrity to take care of, and that, on the contrary, he is so utterly vile, polluted, and abominable, that let him commit what crimes he will, he cannot possibly suffuse his soul with a blacker dye than that which it received from its original mould. Nay more, he has an *excuse* for sinning, and in that a strong *inducement* to it; for he will attribute his sin, (and reasonably enough,) not to his own voluntary agency, but to that vital principle of deep depravity interwoven into his moral constitution, the motions of which he has no power to controul by the exertion of opposite affections and desires.\*— We might farther notice the peculiarly dreadful consequences which are likely to accrue from these notions to a person of melancholy temperament, who is thoroughly convinced that, though he wears the human form, he is in all essential properties an accurate resemblance of the spirits of darkness; and that his soul, though fair to look upon, is nothing else than a whited sepulchre, replenished within, through all its chambers, with the most foetid and loathsome corruption. We omit, however, these details, and others equally shocking, because our principal object is to shew the baneful influence of the opinions we are combating on the *general* interests of morality: and if it be said that this influence is not so generally visible, as a matter of fact, among the defenders of this doctrine, we answer, it is only because they do not act up to the spirit of their own theoretical principles, but suffer them to be neutralized by the admixture of other tenets of a more rational and christian character.

We have hitherto proceeded no farther in our argument than to notice the numerous and weighty objections to the doctrine


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\* Extremes often meet, and they do so most effectually in the present instance; since the doctrine, which charges human nature, *as such*, with the lowest degree of depravity, induces this immediate and inevitable consequence, that our nature is not only *sinless*, but even *incapable* of sinning; for where “no law is,” or (which amounts to the same thing) where the law of *necessity* takes place, there “can be no transgression.”

of man's total depravity, which strike the mind independently of, and antecedently to, the consideration of the *proper* arguments and authorities, by which that doctrine must finally stand or fall; in our next discourse we shall take occasion to examine the passages of Scripture which are usually alledged in its defence.

In the mean time, however, we cannot suffer to pass without farther observation one circumstance, to which we have already incidentally adverted, because it may be made to operate as a motive of no inconsiderable force, to the acquisition of personal virtue and religious principle. It is no improper course which is pursued by moralists and divines, when they dissuade men from vice, for this reason among others, that its growth and diffusion are greatly increased by every particular example of it, so that every individual sinner may become, even without intending it, the cause of misery and ruin to multitudes of his fellow-creatures besides. But how much more effectually ought we to be deterred from sinking our nature in the scale of moral being, by the recollection that the persons *most* likely to be affected by our immoral conduct, are not strangers and aliens to us, in whose interests we have no other concern than that which is prompted by common humanity, but that they are those who are most intimately near to us, and in whose joys and sorrows we instinctively sympathize as we do in our own. And yet the truth of this assertion will be self-evident if it be allowed, as we suppose it will, that by the *general* laws of our physical economy, the mental affections and propensities of the parent are transfused into the child, so that every one, besides the degree of inordinate concupiscence, be it more or less, which he has himself inherited from Adam, *may* transmit to his descendants that portion also of additional and acquired corruption, which he has superinduced by his own actual sins. It is an awful reflection to think that the welfare of all future generations to the end of time, is so far dependent on the character and conduct of that which now exists; and it is a reflection too which must surely be accompanied by a

serious sense of the deep responsibility attached to the execution of a trust, which invests us with a power of influencing the hearts of those who are to succeed us, when we shall "be gathered to our fathers" in "the house appointed for all living."



# SERMON II.

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## On Original Sin.

### PART II.

PREACHED on GOOD-FRIDAY, APRIL 12.

JOB 36. xxiv.

*Remember that thou magnify his work.*

SINCE the Christian revelation proceeded from the Author and Giver of human reason, we may naturally expect that the discoveries of the one will accurately accord with the deductions of the other. The consequences, therefore, of any assumed doctrine, which are brought to light by a fair investigation of it, will form a good presumption either of its truth or falsehood, according as they are consistent with, or contradictory to, reason; but after all it is only the law of God which must finally regulate our opinion and belief. We come therefore now to that infallible criterion for proof, if it is to be found, of the doctrine of man's total corruption.\*

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\* No passage can furnish an adequate proof of it unless it establishes these two points—1st. That man's nature *is* totally corrupt.—2d. That it is so merely in consequence of the Fall. The general line of argument, therefore, which we have taken in the present discourse, is to shew that the texts commonly cited in favour of this opinion are defective either in one or both of the particulars just noticed.

An opinion so directly militating against the attributes of God, and so favourable to the cause of vice and misery, must surely, if true, be supported by clear and decisive Scripture evidence; and the first place of the Bible, in which we should naturally look for it, is that which treats of the Fall, where, however, not a word of it appears. Nor will the acknowledged brevity of the sacred historian account for the omission of a fact, which, if true, would have been incalculably the most important he could communicate to mankind: he need not indeed have expressly told us of that *partial* corruption, which we maintain to be the consequence of the Fall, because *that* would be sufficiently evident to every one, as well from his own sensations and experience, as the general representations of Scripture;\* but man could not, and would not have inferred that he was of a nature perfectly Satanic, without positive information to that effect.

There are indeed some passages of the book of Genesis, though not relating to the Fall, from which the advocates of this opinion have attempted to derive it. The first is, that wherein it is said that, after the Fall, "Adam begat a son in his own likeness after his image;"† the meaning of which words is obviously this—that he became the father of a son like himself, having the same nature which God had given *him*. They have been supposed, however, to signify that the image of *man*, in which our species is *propagated*, is here opposed to the image of *God* in which he was originally

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\* Such for example as the following—"there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not."—Eccles. 7. xx. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. 3. xxiii. "In many things we offend all."—James 3. ii. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."—1 John 1. viii. It is manifestly impossible to explain the universal deviation from moral rectitude, which these passages assert, without supposing that we possess some innate propensities to sin.

† Gen. 5. iiii.

*created*, and that the latter being a state of perfect righteousness, the former must necessarily be a state of perfect depravity. This conclusion is flatly contradicted, as well by the apostle James, as by Moses himself, and that within four short chapters of the very one we have just quoted. In the 9th chapter he is relating the precepts given by God to Noah after the Deluge, and one of them runs in the following terms, the words of God himself:—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man," or, he hath made man. Now it is absolutely necessary, to give any force or consistency to the argument contained in this sentence, to suppose that men, not only after the Fall, but also after the Deluge, were *still* made in the image of God; for, if that *were* the case, it would afford a very cogent reason why murder should be an act highly criminal in *all* ages of the world, but it would afford no reason whatever for the prohibition of that crime in the age of Noah, or at any subsequent period, if man was totally *divested* of that image by the Fall; in short, it would then only prove that our first parents ought not to have been murdered in their state of innocence, that is, while there was yet no one to murder them.\*—The same mode of reasoning is applicable to that passage of St. James,† in which he observes that "with the tongue we bless God even the Father, and therewith" he adds "curse we men, which *are* made after the similitude of God." Not only does the apostle here positively affirm that men even now are *still* made in the image of God, but the nature of his argument will admit of no other interpretation; for our original resemblance to God would have formed no

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\* It may be added that no such phrases, as those we have just considered, are applied by the sacred historian to the production of Cain and Abel, though both of them were conceived and born *after* the Fall no less than Seth, and though their conception and birth are the very next events which Moses mentions after the Fall.—See Gen. 4. i.—ii.

† James 3. ix.



aggravation whatever of the sin of employing contumelious language, if men, in that apostle's days, had entirely *lost* that divine image, to which, as he argues, such indignities ought not to be offered.

In the next place we are told, in the history of events immediately preceding the deluge, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;"\* and, a little farther on, that "the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." The argument for the total depravity of human nature, which is hence attempted to be deduced, is perfectly futile for various reasons. For, first, such a total depravity, occasioned as is supposed by the Fall of Adam, and here given as the cause of the flood, must manifestly be the same in *all* ages, and therefore *could* not have formed any reason for the destruction of the antediluvians in *particular*, but would hold with equal force for the destruction of the world at any other period whatever; whereas evidently the wickedness of that generation *beyond* any that was before it, is assigned by the sacred historian as the reason of the deluge. Secondly, If these texts imply that all mankind were totally depraved, (and unless they go this length they are nothing to the present purpose,) then Noah must have been involved in that depravity equally with the rest of the species, and would consequently have shared the same fate; whereas we know, on the contrary, that he was not only preserved alive, but pronounced to be "a just man, and perfect in his generations," and one that "walked with God."† Thirdly, and principally, in the passages we are now considering, so far is the wickedness of the antediluvians from being attributed to the total depravity of their nature, that it is *expressly* ascribed by Moses to their own actual and voluntary transgressions: "God, he tells us, looked upon the earth and behold it was corrupt,"—and why—hear his own

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\* Gen. 6. v. xi.

† Gen. 6. ix.

reason—"for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."\*

Again, in the 8th chapter of Genesis are the following words, spoken by the Deity himself: "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, *for* the imagination of man's heart is only evil from his youth." This sentence appears at first sight to have a great degree of singularity and awkwardness in its construction, and it is on this account—that we naturally expect the particle "*for*," in the latter clause of the sentence, is about to introduce a reason for the assertion contained in the first part, whereas in truth the reason it does alledge is rather a reason for an *opposite* mode of conduct in the Deity than for that which he here engages to pursue. The fact is, the sentence is incorrectly rendered; the word translated "*for*," signifies, among other senses, "*although*;" so it is rendered by our translators in nine other passages of the Bible,† and so it ought to have been rendered here, by which means we should obtain the following rational and consistent version of the text: "I will not curse the ground any more for man's sake, *although* the imagination of man's heart should be evil from his youth," that is to say God declares that, however great may be the wickedness of men hereafter, he will never again treat them in a similar way, implying that he would use other means for their reformation or their punishment.

A series of quotations from the book of Job, which are commonly produced on this subject, will next claim our attention: they are as follow‡—"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."—"What is man that he should be clean, and he who is born of a woman that he should be righteous."—And "How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water."—The first of these passages occurs in a discourse which relates, not to the

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\* Gen. 6. xii.

† Viz.—Exod. 13. xvii.—Jos. 17. xviii.—2 Sam. 23. v.—Prov. 6. xxxv.—Jer. 4. xxx. three times.—Hab. 3. xvii.—Zech. 9. ii.

‡ Job 14. iv.—15. xiv.—xvi.

elfulness, but the *natural* infirmities and mortality of man; it is of a proverbial kind, and intended to denote that "nothing can be more perfect than its original."\* The two last refer indeed to the *moral* nature of man, but they speak of it only in comparison with the infinite purity of God. Granting, however, that these texts suppose an inherent corruption in the human race, they would decide nothing as to the extent of it, the only point now in dispute; they certainly do recognize the moral frailty and imperfection of man, the strength of his passions, the multitude of his temptations, and the great probability of his falling into numerous sins; but this is the most they do imply, and the most that can be extracted from them. The last of them, moreover, by the nature of the metaphor which it employs, prohibits us from extending their meaning farther, for it informs us by what means it is that man becomes so "abominable and filthy," namely, because he *drinketh* iniquity like water; that is, by his own wilful gratification of an inordinate appetite, he acquires and imbibes that which was at first *extraneous* to him.

Two citations from the book of Psalms come now in order to be noticed. In the 14th Psalm it is said, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no not one." Now, according to the notions entertained by the advocates of man's total depravity, he is of himself utterly *incapable* of seeking God, or even of understanding what true religion is; and how then could the Psalmist, with any shadow even of poetical propriety, have represented the Almighty as engaged in a search, which by the very nature of the case must have been utterly vain and fruitless. It is plain therefore that the Psalmist is speaking, not of inherent but acquired corruption; which interpretation may be further strengthened by a passage in the 10th Psalm, where the wickedness of the wicked is expressly said to consist in

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\* Ep. Patrick's Paraphrase.

*this*; that “he *will* not seek after God, and that God is not in all his thoughts;” he *might* then seek after God, but he *will* not; he has a *power* to think upon God, but he will not *use* it.—The remaining text is that which is to be found in the 51st Psalm: “Behold I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Some commentators have concluded, by critical arguments of great strength; that the words in question are only an hyperbolical and scriptural form of aggravating a man’s actual and personal transgressions, by a bold and figurative description of their inveteracy. To treat the matter however more concisely, it is observable enough that there is not in the whole Psalm a word or hint about Adam, which forms a strong presumption that the author of it had principally in his contemplation some other sort of corruption than what may be derived from the Fall. The object and nature of the Psalm convert that probability into certainty; throughout the whole of this mournful composition the Psalmist endeavours, like every other sincere penitent, to paint his guilt in the blackest colours, and to aggravate it by all possible considerations. The mention, therefore, of his utter depravity by nature would have been directly opposite to his main intention and design, for it would at once have *shifted* the blame from himself upon another, and have furnished the best of all pleas, not to say a perfect apology, for his sin. Besides, the interpretation here contended for is utterly overthrown by the very next verse,\* containing an address of the Psalmist to his offended Maker, of which we cannot do better than give the explanation in the paraphrase of Bishop Patrick: “I am amazed at my folly that I should be so careless, when I was not ignorant that thou requirest us not to entertain with the least kindness those first motions, which we find in our

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\* In our translation it runs thus—“Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom:”—it should rather be—“It is thy will that we should have truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou hast made me to know wisdom.”

thoughts and desires after any evil, but uprightly to oppose them. For which end thou hast put a principle of *better* motions into us, and endued me with wisdom, which secretly checks and corrects those brutish inclinations."

So much importance has been attached in the present question to the following language of the prophet Jeremiah,\* that we must examine it somewhat minutely: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it."—A few verses before, the prophet had commenced a new subject with this denunciation: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord;" to perceive the force and propriety of which expressions it must be remembered that, at the time they were uttered, it was a favourite practice of the Jewish nation to apply to Egypt for assistance whenever their country was invaded or threatened by their neighbours; a piece of policy which God had repeatedly forbidden, as tending to alienate his people from his service, and especially as it led them to neglect the proper means for securing the protection of the Almighty, which had been promised to them, in the fullest extent, on condition of their repentance and reformation. Against this pernicious custom of his countrymen was that admonition of the prophet directed which we have just read; he then proceeds to second his advice by reasons drawn from the utility of complying with it, by shewing, that is, the security and the comfort of trust in God, in opposition to the uncertainty, anxiety, and peril of placing an unlimited reliance upon man; he then continues his argument thus—"the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it;" as if he had said, "you cannot look into the hearts of those in whom you place such a blind and implicit confidence, nor can you be sure but that under the appearance of much sincerity and kindness, they may not conceal the most malicious and treacherous designs against you;" in the

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\* Jer. 17. ix.

next verse he winds up his argument with this striking contrast, "I the Lord search the *heart*; I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to his doings;" that is, to finish the paraphrase we had begun—"but though you are incapable of distinguishing between those on whom you ought and on whom you ought not to depend, yet God discerns the intentions of all men, and therefore, if you will put your trust in him, as on the one hand he will deliver you from the power of your avowed adversaries, so on the other he will never suffer you to be deceived by the insidious professions of your latent enemies." It appears then that the deceitfulness and depravity of heart here described, are attributed only to a certain *portion* (and comparatively, a very *small* portion) of mankind, and that the difficulty supposed by the prophet consists in discovering the wickedness, not of our *own* hearts, but those of *others*. The sense we have assigned to this passage seems on the whole the most probable from viewing it in its natural dependence and connection, but at any rate it must fail of establishing the point for the support of which it is so frequently and confidently brought forward; for the prophet is utterly silent about the *origin* of that desperate wickedness which he here ascribes to the human heart, and therefore, in perfect conformity with *his* sentiments, it may be as well accounted for from the actual and wilful sins of men, by which they have debased their nature, as from their inherent corruption; the prophet only assumes the fact of its *existence*, but leaves the *cause* of it wholly undetermined.

Let us now come to the evidence which the New Testament is supposed to afford in behalf of the doctrine under consideration. This doctrine, if true, would naturally, from its great importance, form a very prominent and conspicuous character in a revelation from heaven intended to give mankind an accurate insight into their own condition; we might therefore expect to hear of it in the earliest promulgation of that revelation, and to see it stated there in the most clear and explicit terms. What then must be our surprise on dis-

covering that in the instructions and exhortations of our blessed Lord, of his fore-runner, and apostles, as recorded in the first five books of the New Testament under the superintending guidance of the Holy Ghost, no mention whatever of it occurs. There is indeed but one text, that we are aware of, in the whole of that portion of the sacred writings, which the advocates of this opinion think at all favourable to their cause, and even that is perfectly inefficient in proving it. The text alluded to is our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus, that, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."\* Now even allowing all that is demanded of us, namely, that these words assert the necessity of a change in every individual in consequence of the wickedness of his heart, it is plain they do not apply to the case before us; for in the first place nothing is here said of the extent of that wickedness, and in the next, for any thing that here appears to the contrary, that wickedness, whether more or less, may be just as well the product of acquired as of innate corruption.

But the favourite ground with our opponents on which to establish their opinion, is the doctrinal division of St. Paul's epistles, especially of that to the Romans, that is to say, a part of Scripture, which, with the single exception of the prophetic book of the Revelations, is confessedly the most obscure in the whole canon of the New Testament. A due attention, however, to the scope of the apostle's argument, the subjects he is discussing, and the peculiarities of his style, will serve to render the darkest parts of his writings sufficiently intelligible, without the introduction of hypothetical doctrines, utterly discountenanced by the clear and practical parts of the word of God.

The 3d chapter of the epistle to the Romans is supposed to contain sentiments which confirm the opinion of man's total corruption. The object of the apostle, in that and the

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\* John 3. iii.

two preceding chapters, is to shew that no flesh can be justified by the deeds of the law, nor indeed any otherwise than by the free grace and mercy of God. For this purpose he enters into a long and detailed argument to prove, that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin, and, having illustrated his position by a quotation from the Psalms, which we have already had occasion to examine,\* he closes it with an assertion similar to that which he had set out with, namely, that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."† As to the quotation here used by the apostle, it has already been shewn that, according to the meaning and spirit of its original author, it conveys no intimation of the total depravity of the human heart; neither, therefore, can it be supposed that it was the intention of St. Paul to derive any such conclusion from it. Nor does he indeed make any attempt of the kind; without supposing any total and inherent depravity as the occasion of it, he merely tells us that all *have* sinned, and he proves the truth of *that* assertion, not by descanting on the innate wickedness of the heart, but by an enumeration of *particular, personal* acts of wickedness, whereby men of all nations had voluntarily blinded their understandings, corrupted their minds, and seared their consciences, and had consequently been deficient in paying that worship and obedience to God, by which he ought to be glorified among men.

Again, in the 5th chapter of the same epistle, the apostle declares that "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."‡ This text, even when explained in conformity with the sentiments of our opponents, will not bear them out in their conclusions, since it is equally consistent with the opinion we maintain, as it is with that which we reject; for as St. Paul does not say in what *degree* men were made sinners by Adam, we cannot hence infer in what degree their nature was corrupted by him. But in truth there is the

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\* See page 20.

† Verse xxiii.

‡ Verse xix.



strongest reason for believing that the phrase here used, of men's being "made sinners" through Adam's transgression, is intended to signify nothing more than that they were thereby made subject to *temporal death*. This is the fact which, throughout the whole of his argument, the apostle is anxious to exhibit, as the ground of that opposition he is establishing between the mortal miseries entailed on us by the first Adam, and the immortal blessings procured for us by the second; this therefore, according to his usual manner, he asserts repeatedly, and under much variety of expression, as that "by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin;" that "through the offence of one many are dead;" and, in the words almost immediately preceding those we are considering, that "by one man's offence death reigned by one." In a similar argument contained in the epistle to the Corinthians,\* and treated in a similar way, he inculcates the same truth in language very like this; namely, by declaring that "by man came death," and that "in Adam all die." This sense, moreover, of the words in question is rendered probable in the highest degree, by the following fact, that the phrase, being made a sinner, is perfectly equivalent in the Hebrew idiom† to suffering a sentence of judicial condemnation, and being adjudged to undergo the punishment denounced against any legal transgression, that is, in the present case, death: numberless instances of this might be easily adduced from our own translation of the Bible.‡ Now it is highly probable that St. Paul would sometimes speak agreeably to his native idiom, and we know as a matter of fact that he frequently did; nay we are positively certain that once at least he used a

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\* I Cor. 15. xxi—xxii.

† And even in the Greek Text "it is not *γινώσκο*, *became* sinners, but *κατιστάθηναι*, were *constituted* sinners, viz. by the will and appointment of the Judge."—*Taylor on Original Sin*.

‡ See the proofs at length in Taylor (part I, page 33,) to whose treatise just mentioned we are greatly indebted.

phrase, all but coincident with that we are now discussing, and in the very sense we have attributed to it, for he says that "*Christ was made sin for us*,"\* which confessedly signifies, and can only signify, that he suffered the punishment denounced against sin, or underwent death for us.

Next we must state, (and we need do little more than state,) those two verses of the 7th chapter to the Romans, in which the apostle describing, not indeed his own feelings, but those of an unconverted Jew, whose character he was personating, makes use of the following expressions: "I know that in me, that is in my *flesh*, dwelleth no good thing."—"I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my *members* warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Now none of these assertions create any necessity for supposing the nature of man to be utterly perverted, inasmuch as they are all perfectly true on the principles of that *mitigated* degree of moral disorganization, which we maintain to have been actually occasioned by the Fall, whereby every child of Adam experiences a *propensity* to sin, in consequence of the undue ascendancy which his sensual appetites, (that is, in the apostle's language, his *flesh*, and the law of his *members*,) have gained over his intellectual and moral sentiments. Observe, moreover, that man is here said to have a principle within him *counteracting* that of carnal appetite; the person here described is said even to "*delight* in the law of God after the inward man," that is, not only to perceive by his reason the suitableness of that law to his nature, and his obligation to observe it, but also to feel a *love* of moral rectitude, which, independently of the motions of sense, inclined him to follow its dictates.

Of the other apostolical epistles only two passages occur worthy of our present notice.

\* II Cor. 5, xxi.

The argument deduced from that text to the Corinthians,\* "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," may be easily answered. The word, which we here translate "natural," is in the original not *φύσις* but *ψυχικός*; not the *natural*, but the *animal* man; and it is undeniably true that the animal man, the man who lives the animal life, who makes sense and appetite the law of his actions, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

Lastly, in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul thus addresses the converts of that Church: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." The strength of this passage in favour of our opponents, is supposed to consist in the final paragraph. To omit the arguments, on which it has been contended that the words "by nature" here signify the same thing as *really, truly, properly* the children of wrath, it may be sufficient to observe that, allowing *all* men to be called, and in the *literal* meaning of the words, by nature children of wrath, (as they fairly *may* be called in *one* sense), yet nothing could be hence inferred as to the *extent* of original corruption, because any, the least and lowest, propensities to *sin*, as they are necessarily opposite, so must they be *displeasing*, to the nature and attributes of an all-pure God. However, in the present instance, the apostle has given an additional, a different, and a better reason, why the Ephesian Gentiles, and the Jews, whom he joins with them, had been, previously to their conversion, children of wrath; and the reason is because they had been the children of *disobedience*—because they had

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\* I Cor. 2. xiv.

walked in trespasses and sins—because they had had their *conversation* in the lusts of the flesh—because they had (not only felt, but) *fulfilled* the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

And, as in the passages we have now been quoting St. Paul does not confirm the doctrine of man's total depravity by nature, so in others he palpably and positively *denies* it, and that too in the very epistle thought most of all to *favour* it; so far from agreeing with the modern advocates of that doctrine, who assert that man has no natural perception of true religion, and much less the capacity of performing its duties, St. Paul declares, even of the Gentiles, that “that which “ may be known of God, God hath shewed it unto them;” \* that “the invisible things of him were *clearly seen* among them, even his eternal power and Godhead;” that, “having “ not the written law, they are a law unto themselves, shewing “ the work of the law written in their *hearts*;” and hence it was, as the apostle proceeds to testify, that by a just and holy God they were deemed “without excuse;” not because they *did* not know him, and *could* not know him, but because that “*when* they knew God, they glorified him not *as* God;” and hence it was that he “gave them over to a reprobate mind,” not because they were *unable* to serve and please him, but because “they did not *like* to retain God in their knowledge,” as the supreme Object of their affections, the sovereign Arbiter and Guide of all their thoughts and actions.

We have now completed the review, which we proposed to take, of the Scriptural evidences, which are commonly supposed to sanction the opinion, that the moral nature of every man, as he receives it from the hands of his Creator, is nothing else than one complete mass of corruption, endued with no other propensities whatever than such as are “earthly, “sensual, devilish;” we have knowingly and wilfully omitted not a single passage, on which, as we believe, the advocates of that doctrine would chuse to rest their defence of it; and

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\* Rom. i. 19, 20, 21, 28; and ii. 14, 15.

the result of that examination has been—that not one of those passages directly and distinctly *asserts* the doctrine in question—that *all* of them *may* be understood in a different sense, and that by far the greater part of them *must* be so understood. Our remarks on these texts have necessarily been very limited, but we hope enough has been said to shew on what very insufficient grounds men have undertaken to “charge God foolishly,” by maintaining and propagating tenets, which make *him* to be in fact the true and proper author of sin.

Your attention has already been directed to some of the practical consequences of this doctrine, but there is one of very mischievous tendency, which still remains to be distinctly noticed; the belief of it diverts the thoughts from the consideration of *actual* sin, and leads to an erroneous estimate of its malignity and enormity. While the mind is absorbed in the fruitless contemplation of certain indefinite and mystical theories concerning original and imputed sin, that which alone, in *strictness* of language, can bear the denomination of sin at all, namely, *personal* and *voluntary* wickedness, is apt to be overlooked and forgotten; and if it should be sometimes recollected, how faintly will it strike the feelings of a man who believes a doctrine which divests him of his free-agency, (as far as his *moral* condition is concerned), and therein of his responsibility likewise. It is only to one who has correct notions of his moral nature, and the extent of its powers, that sin, his own proper sin, can ever appear “exceeding sinful;” and yet *that* is the kind of sin, to which alone our Saviour directed the serious and solemn attention of his followers, and by which we shall be condemned, if we are condemned, at the judgment-seat of God; for, though Adam’s transgression of his Maker’s will has subjected us to *temporal* death, it is only our own violation of God’s holy precepts that can sink our souls into the horrors of *eternal* death.\*

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\* “The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity

In conclusion therefore let us endeavour, on the principles of reason and of Scripture, to imprint upon our minds a deep and solid sense of the heinousness of *actual* sin, an employment highly salutary at all times, and particularly proper at *this* season, when we commemorate the sacrifice of “the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.”

And first, let us contemplate the enormity of sin, considered as an act of disobedience and ingratitude towards God.—The criminality of disobedience and ingratitude is always in exact proportion to the degree of obedience due from the offending party, and the nature and extent of the obligations conferred on him by his benefactor. And which of the sons of men can apply this equitable maxim as a measure of his own transgressions against God, without feeling his countenance fall with shame and grief, his conscience shudder with terrific apprehension, and his whole heart and soul within him become “even like melting wax.” Man, originally a clod of earth, moulded by the Almighty Artificer into a form and substance, whose properties and wonders are past finding out;—waked into being out of the sleep of chaos, by an infusion into his nostrils of the breath of life, and placed in a station of proud pre-eminence over all the other works of God;—bearing on his brow the stamp of divinity, and possessing in his internal constitution a particle of its essence, a rational mind, an immortal soul, capable of feeling and of enjoying existence, of pondering on the past, of perceiving the present, of anticipating the future, of discerning the harmonies, and tasting the sweets of virtue, and of knowing, adoring, and loving God;—man, a being invested with the most ample means of virtuous happiness here, by the very use and enjoyment of which he was designed, in the gracious purpose of his Maker, to prepare himself for a state of *endless* happiness hereafter;—man, a creature thus

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“of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon *him*,  
 “and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon *him*.”—  
*Ezek.* xviii. 20.

constituted, thus endowed, and thus appointed, can find it in his heart to insult the Giver of these unspeakable blessings, and, by deliberately chusing that which is hateful in his sight, to frustrate the riches of his goodness, and make void his counsel against himself. Oh! my brethren, let us think of these things, of these unbounded mercies which we have all so often despised, and let each of us veil his head, and smite upon his breast, saying "God be merciful to me a sinner."

In the next place, we may form some notion of the malignity of sin, by observing its effects on the world at large, and on the sinner himself. When we compare the actual state of things around us with what it might be, and would be, but for the wickedness of man, how striking and how dreadful is the contrast; instead of beholding an earthly paradise, peopled with a race of beings, whose principal care and employment it is to glorify their common Father which is in heaven, and to alleviate the natural misfortunes, and augment the happiness of each and all of their kindred men, how frequently and how widely are we compelled to witness the mournful ravages of sin; sometimes appearing under the form of ambition, and slaughtering men in mere wantonness, till the sword is drunk with the blood of the slain;—sometimes destroying the confidence of civil life, by acts of violence, injustice, and oppression;—sometimes by perfidy and ingratitude tearing asunder the strongest ties which knit the heart of man to man;—and sometimes, in the indulgence of private profligacy, infusing poison into the cup of innocence, and planting in the bosom, where parental and conjugal affection had produced a sweet oblivion of the ills of life, unutterable anguish and bitterness of soul. Such is the face which *creation* wears, in consequence of the voluntary depravity of its lord; but who shall depict even the temporal misery which he is accumulating for *himself* as often as he transgresses the law of his God; who can descend into the dark recesses of the sinner's soul, and describe the sounds and sights of woe which burst upon it from every quarter; the fearfulness and trembling, the suspicion and dismay, wherewith the mind is haunted, when no mortal

enemy is by ; the trumpet-tongue of conscience, which ceases not to cry neither day nor night ; and the convulsive agitations of a tortured spirit, which is "like the troubled sea when it cannot rest." Tranquillity must be sought in the ways of virtue, for "there is no peace, saith God, to the wicked."

Again—let us read the nature and desert of sin in characters visible to the *external* eye, which are daily and hourly presented to our notice, and written by the immediate finger of God. According to his all-righteous judgement "the wages of sin is death," and the sentence pronounced as a *penalty* on the first transgressor, is regularly inflicted on all his descendants, as an awful *memento*, (among other purposes,) of what is properly due to sin, and as a present intimation of what it may expect to receive in a future and eternal world. See, then, the sorry and loathsome remnant of that noble creature, man, when the spirit has fled, and resigned its habitation to the worms. How wonderful ! how terrible ! that he, who was lately beheld with complacency, it *may* be with affection and delight, is now transformed at once into an object of aversion, disgust, and horror. It is *sin* that has wrought the mighty ruin ; in the fearful exhibition of mortality, it is *sin* that sits triumphant on the throne, and death is only the minister by her side.

Lastly, let us learn the enormity of sin in the sight of a pure and righteous God, by the value of the atonement, which he required to be made for it. Neither "thousands of rams" for a sacrifice, nor "ten thousands of rivers of oil" for a libation, could send up a savour unto heaven sufficiently grateful to appease its wrath ; no, nor could even repentance and reformation cancel the hand-writing of ordinances against us, and restore the sinner to the unqualified favour of his Maker. And as no one could avail to liberate himself from the curse of the law, much less was he able to redeem his brother, or make atonement unto God for him ; and all creation would have groaned together in bondage until now had not the second Man from heaven, compassionating our infirmities and miseries,



condescended to lay aside the inherent glory of the only-begotten of the Father, and offer himself as a Lamb for a burnt-offering, holy and acceptable unto God. With what feelings then of deep remorse, of self-abasement, and self-condemnation, should we "look upon him whom we have pierced," when it was our iniquity that nailed him to the tree ; and with what unfeigned and fervent gratitude to him who died for *us* that we might live through *him*.

And can we then continue in sin now that grace and mercy have thus abounded to us, and love and cherish the mortal enemy of God, which called his Son from heaven to the cross. Oh ! let us be infinitely careful how we "crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him again to an open shame;" for, if we "count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing," and refuse to avail ourselves of its sanctifying influence, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation."

# SERMON III.

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## On Regeneration.

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PREACHED on EASTER-DAY, APRIL 14.

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COLOSSIANS iii. 1.

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

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THE object of Christianity is two-fold :—to improve the condition and augment the comforts of man while he is yet a stranger here on earth, and to exalt him to everlasting happiness hereafter. Neither of these purposes, however, is to be accomplished independently of the co-operation of man himself; the latter of them more especially, that which is so infinitely the more valuable of the two, is perfectly contingent on the character, the consistency, and the extent of his own exertions; for the happiness of heaven, held out to the faithful Christian as the glorious prize of his high calling, is purely of a spiritual kind, and as it resembles in its nature the essential happiness of the Deity himself, it is exclusively adapted to the capacities of a soul refined and spiritualized by virtue. The attainment therefore of internal holiness is every where inculcated in the Gospel, not indeed as a meritorious ground on which future bliss may be claimed, but as an indispensable qualification for the enjoyment of it; all the doctrines and

admonitions, the promises and threatenings, interspersed throughout the sacred volume, tend ultimately to this point, and exemplify minutely the assertion of the apostle, that the end, for which our blessed Saviour died and rose again, was to "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."\*

The doctrine, however, which declares the necessity of personal holiness to salvation, though it is indisputably the clearest of any which the Gospel has revealed to us, has in these latter days been involved in strange obscurity, from the novel mode in which it has been stated, and the mysterious language with which it has been described. Under the term "Regeneration" or the "New Birth" opinions have been propagated, which are supported, as we conceive, by no authority of Scripture, and which, if they may be sometimes incidentally the occasion of good, are very frequently the origin of extensive mischief, by perplexing the understanding, and needlessly distressing the consciences of the humble and faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Regeneration,† according to the sentiments of those, who now make it a principal topic of their exhortations, consists in an entire change of heart from sin to holiness, which must necessarily be experienced by every individual before he can be considered in a state of salvation. Those strenuous supporters of this doctrine, Whitfield and Wesley, who signalized themselves so much by their unwearied exertions to bring it into general notice, were more explicit in their accounts of it than most of their successors have been, for they represented the change, which they called the New Birth, not only as radical and entire, and as an indispensable

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\* Tit. ii. 14.

† In the present discourse we have frequently been obliged to use "Regeneration" and "Conversion" as synonymous terms, because they are so considered by those whose sentiments we are examining, though there is a manifest distinction between them according to their scriptural meaning, and both are widely different from "Renovation."

step to salvation, but likewise as something sudden and miraculous ; something which was evidenced, not only by its external fruits, but by the inward feelings of the person who was the subject of it ; and something, consequently, so precise and definite, that the very moment when it was effected could be distinctly ascertained. The practical results of these opinions have been faithfully recorded, (as a matter too of triumph and exultation,) by the two great founders of Methodism ; and it is impossible to read the pages, which contain them, without experiencing, to say the least, a most humiliating conviction of the weakness of human nature. We do not allude to those disgraceful scenes of enthusiasm and folly with a view of casting any imputation upon the persons whose doctrines occasioned them, but only for the sake of shewing the natural tendency of those doctrines themselves, when proposed and received as they were originally preached. Since the time indeed when they first experienced such an extensive promulgation in this country, they have been considerably modified and softened down ; at the present period, we believe, the advocates of these opinions are not precisely agreed among *themselves*, as to the characteristics of the New Birth assigned to it by Wesley and Whitfield, which should be rejected and which retained ; but, as we have no inclination to attribute to any one sentiments which he disavows, and may *legitimately* disavow, we are willing to adopt for our farther consideration *that* description of the nature of regeneration, which is given by its most rational and enlightened defenders in the present day. They tell us, then, that it is a change, a thorough and entire change of heart, and that it is indispensable to every one before he can see the kingdom of God ; but that it *may* be gradual, that it *may* be attained by the *ordinary* influences of the Holy Spirit, and that one proof of its reality is to be sought for in the *conduct* of the person who is supposed to have undergone it.\* This definition deals much in negatives, and it is a

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\* Mr. Simeon, as above

matter of great inconvenience that our opponents on this point have not expressed themselves in language more decided and positive, which might have exhibited their sentiments in a more *tangible* shape, better accommodated to the purposes of examination and argument. The doctrine, however, thus stated, is certainly divested of many of its *exceptionable* characters, nor is it easy to perceive, at first sight, in what respect it differs from that fundamental article in the code of Gospel instruction, (concentrating in itself the essence of the whole,) which calls the sinner to repentance and reformation, and exhorts the Christian "as he has received Christ, so to walk in him," "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Were this indeed the *only* meaning intended to be conveyed by the term Regeneration, according to the modern acceptation of it, we should still have to object to our evangelical brethren that the language they have selected for inculcating truth, is very likely to lead to error, even to the very *same* errors which they seem anxious to avoid.

For first, notwithstanding their concession that Regeneration or the New Birth may be *gradual*, the very term by which they express it implies the *contrary*; the metaphor, which they adopt to represent the nature of the moral change, is one, which directly and unavoidably leads to the conclusion that such a change must be wrought at *once*, and cannot possibly continue in a progressive state of operation during many years of a man's life. This is the impression which will be naturally left on the minds of the poor and ignorant, that is, the great majority of those who are the subjects of ministerial instruction, when they hear their spiritual teachers perpetually and energetically declaiming on the efficacy and necessity of what they denominate the New Birth. The word itself, indeed, is of scriptural origin, but in that application of it, which we are now considering, it has been wrested from the meaning attached to it in Scripture, as we shall see more fully hereafter.

And farther, as a change of heart when sudden and considerable, must be also an event perfectly definite, (and indeed very strongly marked,) and one, therefore, which the person

who suffers it cannot help perceiving at the very instant it takes place, it will follow that, as the *term* Regeneration includes in it the *first* of these qualities, it likewise necessarily comprehends the others. Now these three attributes of the New Birth, namely, its suddenness, its precision, and the internal coteremporary consciousness of its existence with which it must always be inevitably attended, are notions which at once open wide the door to all the extravagancies of enthusiasm; and such notions we contend the illiterate, at least, will be always likely to imbibe, when the doctrines of the Gospel, which exhort to holiness of life, are laid before them in the phrasology, whose natural import we have been now considering.

Moreover, if such a change from sin to holiness be conceived to be no less definite than it is complete, it will be naturally expected that a *counterchange*, if it ever should occur, will be *equally* palpable; nor will any one, who supposes that he has been at once translated from darkness into light, be willing to believe that he has again entered into the regions of the dead, except evidence of the fact be afforded him as sensible and satisfactory in the latter case as in the former. And woe to him who will never believe himself a sinner, till he can discern some *sudden* and *violent* deterioration of his character, for such an one may be on the very brink of perdition before he is aware of his danger. Alas! the spiritual enemy of mankind is too well acquainted with our nature to grant us any *overwhelming* proof of his presence and his power; *his* character is that of a *deceiver*, and therefore when he is leading a captive soul down "to his own place," he chooses not a road where his hapless victim would at every step be *reminded* of the rapid descent, by the precipitous abruptness of the path, and the inharmonious contrasts of the surrounding objects, but one which sinks by an uniform and gentle declivity, sufficient neither to create fatigue, nor forcibly to attract attention, and where the deepening shades imperceptibly melt into each other, till at length they terminate in the horrid blackness of eternal night.

Again—this doctrine, when firmly believed in the sense, in which its very name requires that it *should* be, is very apt to engender that pernicious temper of mind, a feeling of religious security; for suppose a person convinced of the fact that he has already experienced a sudden and striking transformation from sin to holiness, will he not think that the one thing needful in the Christian life is in his case perfectly attained; that *his* warfare is accomplished, his iniquity pardoned, and that he is no longer, like others, a candidate for heaven, but in possession of an authentic title to it, confirmed, and ratified, and miraculously sealed by the finger of God himself? And where will be then the necessity for the exercise of those virtues, which most properly belong to a probationary state, and are implied in the profession of the Christian name? for caution, and vigilance, and labour, and all those numberless and daily-recurring acts of spiritual discipline, by which the sober-minded Christian endeavours *continually* to “mortify his members” which are upon the earth,” and to rise, by slow, perhaps, but sure gradations, to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Opinions therefore of this kind will have a tendency in a great degree opposed to all the practical principles of the Gospel, by tacitly representing the great act of Regeneration performed once for all, as a substitute for the *habits* of repentance and renovation, which are required of a Christian through the whole course of his life. We do not affirm that the doctrine before us, (unless indeed when it is conjoined with that of Final Perseverance,) involves such a conclusion as a logical consequence; we are only pointing out the *feelings* it is likely to produce on minds, either incapable of reasoning much on religious subjects, or unaccustomed to found their opinions on a regular process of cool and careful argument.

But the misapprehension and mischief likely to ensue from an improper use of the *term* Regeneration; will be further augmented by certain particulars comprized in the doctrine itself. The mighty change, which it imports, is commonly represented as vastly superior to the capacity of all human power, and one in which the Holy Spirit is not only a *concurrent*,

but the *sole* Agent;\* and hence it will follow that they, who are sitting beside this modern Bethesda, will have no inclination to bestir *themselves* for the purpose of stepping into the healing pool, from an imagination that the Angel, who troubleth the water, is the only being that can help them into it; in other words, they, who are waiting for, what they sometimes call, the Baptism of the Spirit, will be deprived of every motive and inducement to virtuous exertion of their own, as long as they believe that their labour must be utterly ineffectual, and that no attempts, which they can make in their unregenerate state, to do the will of their Maker, can possibly be acceptable in his sight.

Indeed we do not think it would be going too far to assert that the doctrine in question may in one way operate as a direct encouragement to sin. For let us suppose a person of uncultivated understanding, little capable of forming opinions for himself, and placing an implicit confidence in those of his spiritual instructors; and let us farther suppose that, with little other learning, he has been acquainted from a child with the Holy Scriptures, and has uniformly endeavoured in singleness of heart to conform his life to their directions, as far as he has been able to comprehend them. Now preach to such a man for the first time the modern doctrine of Regeneration; let him hear from a pulpit, whose decisions he considers as oracular, a discourse informing the auditors that they, even every individual of them, must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God: in taking a retrospect of his *own* spiritual progress, which has been going on from day to day

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\* Thus Mr. Scott in speaking of his own conversion: "Man I am persuaded could not have done it, but this hath God wrought, and I am not more a wonder to others than myself;"—and again—"the Lord having made me willing in the day of his power, I was forced to confess, 'O Lord, thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed.'"

"*Scott's Theological Works*," Vol. 1. p. 98—99.



quietly and silently, he will perceive no such wonderful change as that just described to him, nor will he understand how it is even possible in his case, unless by his *putting off* those religious principles and habits, which it has been the uniform business of his life to acquire; in short he will conclude, by mere dint of common sense, that if the change implied in Regeneration be necessary to all, every person must first be a grievous sinner before that by *conversion* he can become a saint; and that, the more heinous his previous iniquities have been, the stronger will be the evidence of the reality of his conversion.\* This instance, however, has been proposed, not so much from the belief that any one would draw such an inference by a deliberate and methodical process of reasoning, as to illustrate the nature and bearing of those floating, indefinite notions, which evangelical discourses on Regeneration are calculated to excite.

In making these latter observations we have entered on a department of our subject, which must now be pursued somewhat more in detail. The objections already noticed to the doctrine of Regeneration, as it is sometimes understood in these days, are principally founded on the nature of the

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\* It is on this account, we suppose, namely, to satisfy their own minds of the certainty of their Conversion, that the defenders of these opinions take such singular pains to make themselves appear enormous sinners in the outset. If we could believe one half of what they say, the greater part of them must have been originally the most worthless beings that ever lived; but we are inclined to receive all such strong statements *cum grano salis*, because we think that in this particular the authors of them have unintentionally but effectually imposed upon *themselves*. As no one, however, doubts that the *apostles* underwent a real Conversion, we cannot perceive the necessity, for that aggravated description of the conduct of some of them, which is given by Mr. Scott in the following remarks on their mission: "In this embassy the vilest blasphemer, oppressor, murderer, and persecutor is included; not even the hoary-headed profligate is excepted." (Works, Vol. I. p. 231.)

language in which it is exhibited ; we must now advert to one part of that doctrine itself which we conceive to be *erroneous*. Our opponents say that, be a man's early moral and religious advantages, or the general tenour of his subsequent life, what they may, he cannot possibly be saved in the next world unless he is sensible that at some period or other his heart has been entirely changed in this ; we, on the contrary, maintain it to be a very possible, and, it is to be hoped, not a very unfrequent case, that a person, having been brought up under religious parents or friends, and profiting by the lessons of piety he has imbibed under their care, shall enter life with a clear conscience and sound Christian principles, and afterwards, by a faithful use of his means of improvement, (including therein the co-operation of the Holy Spirit,) proceed in an uniform tenour of Christian practice ; and shall at last lie down in peace, full of faith and of good works, and rejoicing in the well-founded hope of a happy immortality, having never been conscious of any *other* difference between the successive stages of his spiritual course, than that which regards the *degree* of his attainments in virtue and holiness. The *universal* necessity therefore of the change they call Regeneration is the point in dispute between us, and on this we are fairly at issue.

Now, considering this question on the grounds of reason, it must be extremely evident that by any decisive change effected in the character and conduct of one, who is already virtuous, the last state of that man will be only rendered worse than the first ; and if it be said that external conduct is no certain criterion of internal motives and principles, we would only ask what other *can* be laid down, on which such fallible creatures as we are can possibly regulate our opinions of each other ; such an one also is perfectly consonant with our Saviour's maxim, that we are to judge of what is in the heart by what proceedeth out of the heart,\* and it is virtually approved by

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\* Matt. 15. xix.—Luke 6. xliii—xlv.

our opponents themselves, when they assert that good works are the evidences of faith. When therefore a person is convinced of his own sincerity in his Christian profession, and his life bears ample witness of it in the fruits of holiness it produces, we should naturally conclude that the change, denominated Regeneration, is, in his case, neither requisite nor practicable. A curious corroboration of this opinion may be drawn from materials furnished by our opponents themselves. In the biographical accounts, which form so considerable a share of their theological writings, we are frequently presented with long and minute narratives of the effects of Regeneration or Conversion, in individual cases. Now it must be confessed that, in very many instances, the characters, in which these transformations are represented to have happened, as portrayed by the hand of their friends and panegyrists, are such as were very *capable* of conversion, and to whom that event would be most *necessary* and desirable.\* And when

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\* Such descriptions occur still more frequently, (as has been remarked in a preceding note,) when persons of these opinions become their own historians in matters of religion. Accordingly we are not surprized, (though somewhat scandalized,) to hear Mr. Scott giving the following account of his own religious condition at the time of his taking Orders: "Thus, with a heart full of pride and wickedness, my life polluted with many unrepented, unfor-saken sins; without one cry for mercy, one prayer for direction or assistance, or a blessing upon what I was about to do; after having concealed my real sentiments under the mask of general expressions, after having subscribed articles directly contrary to what I believed, and after having blasphemously declared, in the presence of God and of the congregation, in the most solemn manner, sealing it with the Lord's supper, that I judged myself to be "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take that office upon me," *not knowing or believing that there was a Holy Ghost*, on September the 20th, 1772, I was ordained a Deacon."

*Works, Vol. 1, p. 14.*

Now, granting all these things to be true, it certainly behoved

such is the state of things, there is of course no great difficulty in exhibiting an evident contrast between the conduct before and after conversion; but in the case of persons of an opposite description, to whom nothing *else* could be objected than that they were previously *unconscious* of conversion, the attempt to delineate the change it produces is perfectly inefficient and unsuccessful; the subject of it is *called* perhaps before-hand, a good moral man, and it may be a sterwards, a faithful disciple, or a vital christian; but, on examining and comparing the motives and actions ascribed to him in these two respective states, they appear, for any thing that we can perceive, to be, in *kind*, precisely the *same*.\*

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Mr. S. to humble himself deeply for them before God, but we think he would have better consulted the interests of religion, if he had omitted to trumpet them forth to the world, a practice, which seems to us very like that of "glorying in one's shame:" but then by so doing he appears more like the "vile blasphemer" and "hoary-headed profligate," that is, more *apostolic* in his character, according to his own account of the apostles.

\* There is one instance of the accuracy of this remark, which has always appeared to us perfectly decisive, and which may of itself supply the place of a thousand. The circumstances, which, in our opinion, render it so peculiarly strong are these.—1st. It meets the case before us exactly and precisely, for it is an account professedly written for the express purpose of shewing how, in such an instance as we have supposed, any radical change could be necessary, and in what that change, when it did take place, consisted. 2dly. The author of it enters into the subject very minutely, pursuing it through no less than sixteen octavo pages: he was evidently anxious to establish his point, and he has laboured at it very strenuously. 3dly. The writer is not an ignorant and irrational enthusiast, but a scholar of the first eminence, a man of the clearest intellect, of the highest accomplishments, and of gigantic powers of mind. We have perused repeatedly, and with the utmost attention, the whole of his explanatory observations; and we must say

To proceed a step farther in the argument. The reason alledged for the universal necessity of that radical change implied in the term Regeneration is derived from the doctrine of Original Sin, when taken in its most *extensive* acceptation, from the opinion, that is, that the nature of every man, as he inherits it from his forefathers, is *utterly corrupt* and sinful; and this is indeed the only supposition on which such a necessity can possibly be supported, for it is very evident that an entire change of heart cannot be necessary to the production of holiness, unless it has been preceded by a state of entire depravity. Now we have formerly attempted to shew that no such doctrine is contained in Scripture as that which vilifies the nature of man to this inordinate degree; and consequently, if *that* notion be unfounded, the one we are now examining, which is a corollary from it, must stand in the same predicament.

Its advocates, however, undertake to defend it on its own independent merits by the evidence of Scripture. A few words, to be presently offered, on the nature of the argument which they adopt for that purpose, will, we think, be sufficient to shew its inefficacy.

First, however, be it observed, that no other scriptural authority can be decisive of the present question, as it affects *ourselves*, than one, which asserts the universal necessity of Regeneration, not to unconverted Jews and Heathens, but to professing Christians; nor would the case be altered even if our opponents were prepared to say that the moral condition of countries, where the faith of Christ is known and received, is

that, in our opinion, even *he* has utterly failed of accomplishing his purpose. We would, however, request our readers to judge for themselves by consulting the work here referred to; and as our respect for no man shall induce us to suppress any evidence, which may be advanced in favour of, what we believe to be, the truth, we have no hesitation in adding that the work we mean is, "The Life of the late Rev. Joseph Milner," prefixed to his "Practical Sermons," especially from page 36 to 52 inclusive.

no better than that which prevailed in the world before the Sun of Righteousness arose to dispel its darkness ; a supposition, indeed, which would argue no very high opinion of the efficacy of Christ's religion in purifying the principles, and reforming the conduct, and raising the *general* standard of virtue, both in theory and practice. An authority, however, of the description here necessarily required, they have long and ineffectually been invited to produce ; indeed so far from answering this call in the only way which could be beneficial to their cause, they are on the contrary constrained to allow that the *term* Regeneration itself, as far as it is applicable to the present subject, is only found once in Scripture, and that in the single passage where it *does* occur,\* it stands in close connection with *Baptism*, and refers to a change already past. The truth is that the word Regeneration, as used by certain modern writers, has been forced from its original meaning, and it is this novel and unwarrantable application of the term, which, in the manner above explained, ever has been, and ever will be, a grievous stumbling block, and rock of offence ; and it is this, which has engendered controversies without number and without end, where there was often no fundamental difference of opinion. In the text just alluded to from the epistle to Titus, it is surely as plain as words can make it, that the term in question is intended to signify, not indeed the mere *rile* of Baptism, but a spiritual effect, which accompanied it, and was produced by it as the *external* instrument. The same thing may be said of the similar phrase, to be " born again," occurring in our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus. If, therefore, our opponents would establish a distinction between baptismal and spiritual Regeneration, it must be grounded on other passages, for in both these the two things are spoken of as closely connected with each other ; nor can it possibly be argued, on either of *these* authorities at least, that the Baptism of water and of the Spirit ever can be separated. Now the only remaining

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\* Tit. iii. 5.

text, in which the New Birth is noticed in so many words, is in the general epistle of Peter,\* and there the apostle addresses the whole body of Christians scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, as having been already born again: which we think can only be accounted for on the supposition that he considered their New Birth to have taken place when they became Christians, that is, at their Baptism. This too was the sense attached to the word Regeneration by the usage of Christian antiquity,† and this is the sense, which it uniformly bears in the offices and formularies of our own Church.

If, however, the *terms*, in which our opponents have explained, (or rather obscured,) their sentiments on this point, be deemed incorrect, it still remains to be seen whether those sentiments *themselves* are correct. We have asserted the contrary in one particular, the universal necessity to professing Christians of that entire change, which *they* call Regeneration.

Our opponents seem inclined to abandon the Scriptural use of the terms Regeneration and the New Birth, as untenable ground for their argument; for they have taken up of late a different position,‡ and now contend that such a change is plainly declared and insisted on in Scripture under *other* terms, as where Christians are exhorted to be “renewed in the spirit of their minds,” “to put off the old,” and “to put on the new man.”

Many laboured, and some ingenious, attempts have been made of late to prove, that no such change is necessarily effected in Baptism, for the purpose of inferring that it therefore still remains to be accomplished. With this view Baptism, an institution expressly and particularly appointed by our blessed Saviour himself, by him, that is, who came to abolish unmeaning rites, and to introduce spiritual holiness

\* I Pet. i. 23.

† See Dr. Mant's Tract on Regeneration, p. 38, 39.

‡ Mr. Simeon, as above.

in their stead, has been represented as absolutely inferior, in point of efficacy, to many of the ordinances of the Mosaic code. In the case of infant baptism more especially, we may clearly see how completely it has been divested of its *sacramental* character, for our opponents have declared in plain terms, that any spiritual benefits, with which that Sacrament may be attended to an infant, arise solely from the worthiness of the minister, and the pious supplications of himself and the congregation;\* that is to say, in other words, that Baptism has no sort of spiritual efficacy in itself, and operates in no respect by virtue of any blessing annexed to it as an institution of divine appointment. We have neither time nor occasion to examine the arguments adduced in favour of this unchristian hypothesis, but we cannot help remarking on one of them that the cause, which *needs* its support, must surely be a very weak one. It happened that schisms and contentions had broken out in the Church of Corinth, from an absurd custom, adopted by some of the converts there, of arranging themselves into different parties, each assuming, as a badge of distinction, the name of some favourite minister, of him probably by whom they had been respectively baptized. St. Paul, therefore, in his epistle to that church, expresses his thankfulness that *he* had not contributed, even *accidentally*, to these uncharitable divisions, for that he had himself in person baptized but two or three of them: "I thank God," he says, "that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine *own* name."† Now this natural and very intelligible observation of the apostle has been actually

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\* Mr. Simeon, as above.—So also Mr. Scott jun.:—"Baptism we consider as the sign of regeneration; as a pledge of it to those who receive Baptism rightly; and also as a *means*, by which the blessing *may* be conveyed in answer to the devout prayers of the several parties concerned in the administration and reception of this Sacrament."—*Effect of Baptism*, p. 17.

† I Cor. i. 14.



cited to prove, that in his opinion Baptism was an ordinance of a very inferior and secondary nature.\* It is really difficult to listen with seriousness to such sort of reasoning as this; to set about a formal refutation of it would be to offer a great indignity to the understanding of any person of common sense.—Another of the methods, which has been taken to disprove the spiritual effects of Baptism, is this: If, it is said, certain benefits are necessarily attached to this Sacrament when lawfully administered, they must of course attend it in *all* such cases; our opponents therefore demand, whether we can point out any benefits belonging to Baptism, when received by an adult, who wants the qualifications necessary to ensure the *full* amount of its spiritual advantages, namely, the qualifications of repentance and faith.† We answer that we can, and those benefits are, a right and title to salvation on the terms of the Christian covenant, provided the person *afterwards* performs the conditions of that covenant. This conclusion is built on the plain declarations of Scripture, which speak of the rite of initiation into the religion of Christ, as to take place but *once*, and under no circumstances whatever, as of repentance after sin, or otherwise, to be repeated. St. Paul is express on this point, for he tells us in so many words that, as there is but “one Lord, and one faith,” so there is likewise but “*one Baptism*,”‡ and consequently the title, which Christians enjoy, *because* they are Christians, of pleading the privileges of the Christian covenant, is always conferred by Baptism when duly administered. It would have been well, however, if the advocates for the inefficacy of Baptism had been as careful to place in a prominent point of view what we deny of that Sacrament, as what we affirm of it; but since they have not done so, we must here supply that omission; we deny then

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\* By Mr. Simeon, as above.—And by Mr. Scott jun.—“In “one place St. Paul even speaks of baptizing as a very secondary “and inferior employment, compared with preaching the Gospel.”

*Effect of Baptism*, p. 83.

† Mr. Scott jun. p. 117.

‡ Eph. iv. 5.

totally that Baptism is sufficient to salvation; we grant that the seed, which it sows in the heart, may be afterwards trodden down and destroyed; and we even allow that it never can, and never will, spring up and bring forth fruit, unless it be diligently watched, and cultivated, and weeded from the tares, which the enemy hath sown around it. Had these admissions been duly weighed, and properly stated, many of the arguments of our opponents might have been spared, for they are perfectly  *nugatory*  except when addressed to persons, who hold the opinion which they unjustly fasten upon us, the opinion, to describe it in their own language, that Baptism is “a viaticum for heaven.”\*

We have been tempted to make these few desultory observations on a celebrated subsisting controversy, because it came in our way, and not because the decision of it is of the least importance in the question now before us, which, as we have limited it, is simply this:—whether the Scriptural phrases of “being renewed,” of “putting off the old,” and “putting on the new man,” are intended to signify that radical change which our opponents call Regeneration. Now they assert that all these expressions are to be understood in one and the same sense; we agree with them, and therefore it would be sufficient if we could ascertain the sense of any *one* of these phrases; but it is to be remarked that they *all* occur in the exhortations addressed by St. Paul to four different Christian Churches; Churches, observe, which were founded either by himself or his brother apostles, and the progress and transactions of all of which were certainly superintended by himself;† and, lastly, Churches, whose members he uniformly addresses, (according to the opinion of our opponents, distinctly expressed,) on the supposition that they were Christians, not in name only, but in deed and in truth.‡ Consequently, as St.

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\* See Mr. Simeon's “Congratulatory Address,” 2d edit.  
Appendix, p. 41.

† II Cor xi. 28.      ‡ Mr. Scott jun. p. 171.

Paul could never intend to preach Regeneration, in its modern sense, to persons of *this* description, it will follow that those instances of the language, which he employed in writing to them, cannot be equivalent to the term Regeneration in the meaning here attempted to be given to it.—Nay farther, St. Paul applies to *himself* the very same language he had used respecting his converts. In one of his epistles,\* after mentioning the manifold afflictions he endured for the Gospel's sake, he adds, "but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day;" so that, unless our opponents will maintain that the process of Regeneration, according to *their* notions of it, was going on in the apostle himself at this very time, that is, two and twenty years after his call to the Christian ministry,† it must be clear that the Scriptural terms, under which they contend such a change is designated, convey in truth some very different idea.

What they do signify may be very easily and satisfactorily seen. The "new man," *absolutely taken*, is, in the language of St. Paul, the Gospel dispensation. This will appear from a passage in the epistle to the Ephesians,‡ which we are under the necessity of quoting at some length, that its full meaning may be clearly derived from the context. The apostle, having described the lamentable condition of both Jews and Gentiles in their unconverted state, and the contemptuous light in which the uncircumcised Gentile had been considered by the children of Abraham, proceeds to address the Ephesians as follows: "But now in Christ Jesus ye, who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so

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\* II Cor. iv. 16.

† The dates are taken from Bp. Tomline's "Christian Theology."

‡ Eph. ii. 13—18.

making peace ; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby ; and came and preached peace, to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father." Here it is plain that Christ is said to have "made the new man out of twain," by erecting the Gospel dispensation, which included within its capacious offers of grace and mercy both Jew and Gentile, who were both henceforward to have access, by one Spirit and through one Mediator, to the Father.

This then being the signification of the "new man," let us next see what it is to *put on* the new man. This phrase, according to its Scriptural import, admits of two senses ; namely, to put on the new man *outwardly*, that is, to make an external profession of Christianity ; and to put him on *inwardly*, that is, to admit the full influence of the Christian temper into the heart. The former of these meanings is established by the following text :\* "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and *have put on the new man*," which can only mean that they had embraced Christianity in profession ; for, to persons, who had imbibed the entire Christian character, there would have been no occasion to prohibit the sin of lying. Again, as to the second sense of the words, in another place† the same apostle says : "ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus ; that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and that ye *put on the new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Here the apostle exhorts the Ephesians, who were already Christians by profession, *still* to put on the new man, and in the very next verse he proceeds to inform them *how* this was to be done, for he adds—*wherefore*, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour ;" that

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\* Col. iii. 9.

† Eph. iv. 24.

is, "because the truth as it is in Jesus obliges you to put off the old man, to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new man,—therefore put away lying, speak every man truth, and perform all the other moral and religious duties, which Christianity enjoins, of which the apostle goes on to give a very extensive catalogue, reaching, without intermission, to the end of the epistle. Other instances of a similar kind might be easily produced, if necessary, in which the apostle explains his meaning precisely in the same way as he does in the case before us, that is, where he speaks of the "new man," and of the true, internal, Christian character as one and the same thing.

We trust therefore it is by this time abundantly evident what the writers of the New Testament mean when they urge baptized Christians to become transformed, and renewed in the spirit of their mind; to put off the old, and put on the new man: namely, that it is to acquire those dispositions and habits of holiness, "without which no man shall see the Lord;" and it may be added, that *they* considered such a renovation, not as instantaneous, but progressive, even under the most favourable circumstances, for St. Paul declares, in a passage already quoted, that even in *himself*, the inner man was renewed *day by day*.—Now, whether the acquisition of the Christian character may, in conformity with Scriptural language, be called *Regeneration*, can, we think, admit of no doubt, but whether or not it may with propriety be called a *conversion*, will manifestly depend upon circumstances: if the person, in whom it is effected, was originally dead in trespasses and sins, then it is a conversion properly so called; if, on the other hand, he be one, who has faithfully endeavoured in sincerity of heart to serve the Lord from his youth upward, it will be only a perseverance in the faith, and a going on unto perfection.

We have seen then the true import of that class of Scriptural passages, on which our opponents, by their own acknowledgement, principally ground their notion of Regeneration; and who can help regretting from the bottom of his

soul, that a doctrine, so perfectly clear, and rational, and Christian, as that which enforces the necessity of acquiring holiness where it does not yet exist, and of continually augmenting it where it does, dressed up in a new form, and disguised under an appellation, for which there is no adequate Scriptural authority, should have lent its aid, with fatal success, to the cause of enthusiasm, and have spread alarm, dismay, and terror among the weaker members of the body of Christ? We would conjure those who are in the habit of stating their sentiments in this objectionable language, as they value the peace and unity of the Christian Church, or the welfare of immortal souls, to expunge from their vocabulary a technical phraseology, the use of which *can* do no good, and may, or rather *must*, be productive of infinite mischief. If they will only be content to teach in plain language, the plain doctrines of Scripture, we entertain the most sanguine hopes that all differences between us, on the *present* subject at least, will speedily disappear; for we will join with them, heart and hand, in denouncing against the sinner all the terrors of the Lord, and in sedulously inculcating on the professing Christian, that the only criterion of his being really "risen with Christ," is to be found in the daily-increasing earnestness, wherewith he seeks "the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."





## SERMON IV.

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### On Justification by Faith.

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PREACHED on SUNDAY, APRIL 21.

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TITUS iii. 8.

*This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works,*

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WITH that class of the ministers of our Church, which we call evangelical, (and we trust we may do so without offence, as it is a title they have given themselves,) there are certain doctrines of the Gospel, which appear to be peculiar favourites. These they perpetually bring forward, we will not say to the utter *exclusion* of all others, but certainly with the effect of throwing all others considerably into the back ground. One of these constantly-recurring topics is that of Justification by Faith, and the manner, in which it is treated on those occasions, may be well sufficient to excite surprize; it is not, generally speaking, explained, and illustrated, and drawn out into its practical consequences, but it is strongly *insisted on*, and vehemently *defended*; all other modes and means of Justification than faith, are consigned to utter reprobation, and against good works more especially, considered in *that* relation, the utmost efforts of their arguments and eloquence are



directed. We are desired,\* in terms, which in our estimation at least are neither elegant nor decent, to take the best work we ever performed in our lives, and to go to God with it, and say—"here is ~~a~~ work, a perfectly good work, and one, for which we ask no favour nor mercy, but we claim salvation as our due and wages for performing it." Of course the futility, (we might also add the gross absurdity,) of *such* an application is easily demonstrated, and then the conclusion is, that the original hypothesis is triumphantly established.

Having stated, (and really with some difficulty,) a supposition and an address, which to our taste savours strongly of impiety, let us now ask ourselves, with all the coolness we can, what these things mean; what is the immediate impression they make; and the inference naturally drawn from them. Is it not *this*, or can it be any *other* than this?—that the doctrine of Justification by faith, according to its Scriptural import, that is, by faith as the medium, and Christ as the meritorious cause, is singularly *neglected* to be enforced by the generality of the established clergy; or rather, that they *disbelieve* it; that they have laid some "other foundation than that, which is laid" in the Lord Jesus, and that they teach their hearers to expect salvation on the ground of their own merits. That this is the imputation intended to be conveyed by such discourses as we have just described, with the utmost desire to be candid and charitable, we are yet compelled to believe; for where is the utility of labouring to establish what is never denied, of defending what it not attacked, and of contending without an antagonist? But whether this charge be designed or not by those, from whose language it *may* and *will* be inferred, we are anxious to vindicate our brethren from the odium attending it, and very deservedly if it were substantially true.

We must acknowledge, however, that we do not preach the doctrine in question so frequently and so directly as our

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\* By Mr. Simeon, as above.

opponents, nor do we state it precisely in the same language as they; and the cause why we decline imitating their practice in this instance, is, that we think it, on some accounts, both useless and dangerous.

The reasons, by which we are induced to think that laboured and frequent disquisitions on the doctrine of Justification by faith, are comparatively *useless*, come first in order to be mentioned.

First, then, it is one of the most obvious doctrines to be met with in the charter of man's salvation, that book with which all Christians must be supposed to have a general acquaintance, that Justification, with all its attendant blessings, of Sanctification here, and Salvation hereafter, can be attained no *otherwise* than by faith in Christ. This is a doctrine, which beams upon the eye from every page of Scripture, and shines throughout the New Testament particularly, in the full effulgence of glory. Open the Law, and read the first of its promises to mankind; it is, that the Seed of the *woman* should bruise the serpent's head:\* proceed farther, and you behold the lawgiver himself raising up an instrument of life and health as the type and emblem of the Saviour:† turn to the Psalms, and you hear the true David declaring, "burnt offering and sacrifice for sin hast thou not required, then said I, Lo I come:"‡ consult the prophets, and they will tell you, how that "*he* was bruised for *our* iniquities," that "*with his stripes we are healed*," and that "*the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*"§ It would be an useless waste of time and trouble to produce passages from the New Testament inculcating the same great truth, that to them, who would be saved by his name, Christ must be all in all as the meritorious cause of their salvation, since it is he alone "*who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*"||

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\* Gen. 3. xv.    † Num. 21. ix. compared with John 3. xiv.

‡ Ps. 40. vi—vii.    § Isaiah 53. v—vi.    || I Cor. 1. xxx.

And farther, this doctrine is formally acknowledged by all Christians in that very profession of faith which first constitutes them Christians; in our own Church, at least, the child, who is educated according to her institutes, is taught, as soon as he is able to learn the privileges and obligations attending Baptism, that God hath called him to that state of salvation, "*through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*"\*

On these grounds we consider the doctrine of Justification by faith as one of the "first principles of the oracles of God," and one, therefore, which must be known even by those who are but "babes in Christ;" and it is also one, which is constantly recognized under a great variety of forms, contained in the service of the Church, by every congregation which we have occasion to address. Now we have the authority of an apostle for "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," in order to "go on unto perfection," and not to employ ourselves continually in "laying again the foundation of repentance, and of faith towards God."† We do not mean that these subjects should be systematically neglected; far from it; like all others of a religious kind, even the plainest truths of *natural* religion, they are to be occasionally and specifically introduced to the notice of our auditors, "lest at any time they should let them slip;" these topics are to take their turn with others, but they are not to occupy a disproportionate share of our attention. Agreeable to these maxims, we are well persuaded, is really the practice of the great majority of our ministerial brethren; sometimes they confine themselves to a particular explanation of the doctrine before us, sometimes they dwell upon its practical tendency, and at all times, whether expressly mentioned or not, it forms the general ground-work of their exhortations to Christian holiness.

Farther—the *doctrines* of the Gospel, inestimably precious as they are, are yet, after all, only preparatory to its *precepts*; a man must certainly believe as a Christian, before he

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\* Church Catechism.

† Heb. 6. i.

can possibly act as a Christian; but then the fundamental articles of the Christian faith are easily stated, readily understood, and, for the most part, willingly received; the great difficulty is this—to convert them into practical principles for the regulation of the conduct; and hence it becomes a most important and necessary part of the ministerial office, not only to exhort the faithful in general terms “to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,”\* but also to shew them specifically, and according to Christian principles, the nature and extent of the relative and personal duties of life; how temptations are to be avoided, afflictions sustained, and advantages improved; and what is the path, which religion prescribes, amidst a concurrence of apparently opposite obligations. Discourses, intended to answer these salutary purposes, are too often, we fear, unduly appreciated by a certain class of our brethren, (for a reason perhaps which we may be able to assign hereafter,) and sometimes very contumeliously treated under the name of *moral essays*. It must be acknowledged indeed, that moral essays, when they are *merely* such, that is, when they are destitute of the animating spirit of the Gospel, are greatly out of character in a Christian pulpit, and will produce comparatively but a faint and feeble impression; when, however, the same denomination is extended to discourses, whose object is to illustrate, recommend, and enforce moral duties on Christian principles, and such compositions are at once set down as *unevangelical*, because they do not happen to inculcate, expressly and minutely, the peculiar and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel—here we may defend ourselves on *very* high authority, for certainly, if *this* be a proper application of terms, then was our blessed Saviour’s sermon on the mount, the most unevangelical discourse that was ever written.

We think then that a Christian minister does not employ himself in a way the most advantageous to his people, by

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\* Tit. 2. 1.

perpetually insisting on the doctrine of Justification by Faith; both because it is one of the elementary doctrines of the Gospel, and one, therefore, generally known; and because, like all other doctrines, it is to be reduced at last into practical principles; for which branch of instruction there will manifestly be no opportunity, if we consume that time in stating the theory, a great portion of which ought to be bestowed in directing the application of it.

But farther—that incessant attention, which our evangelical brethren are accustomed to devote to this single point, may be also attended with danger; for their auditors, naturally estimating the importance of any subject by the frequency and fervency with which it is pressed upon their notice, will be inclined to suppose that the hearty reception of this doctrine, and a few others of a similar kind, is the grand, essential article, in which consists the duty of a Christian.

To this general consideration is to be annexed another of a more specific character, which greatly increases the danger of preaching the doctrine in question, unless it be accompanied with certain explanations and limitations. This hazard arises from the comprehensive nature of the *terms* which form the proposition, “Justification is by Faith;” for each of the words, “Justification” and “Faith” has many different senses, by different combinations of which it is plain that we might have a vast *variety* of propositions, included in the single one just stated, of which some would be true, and some would be untrue. Many of them it is allowed would be altogether foreign to the subject, and there are in fact but two, the discussion of which is at all material to our present purpose; these are now to be examined.—The religious sense of the word “Justification,” which is the most simple, the most agreeable to its etymology, and of the most frequent occurrence in Scripture, is this;—“a gracious act of God, whereby he is pleased to consider a sinner as a just person, in regard to all judicial consequences of his character and con-

duct.”\* This being the case, it becomes a matter of the last importance that, when we speak of Justification, we should be perfectly clear and precise in defining the particular time when such justification exists, and the period for which it remains in force; because a man may be in a state of justification, or esteemed innocent by God, at some *one* period of his life, and yet he may *not* be in such a state at the time of his *death*, in which case he will fail of attaining salvation. To avoid ambiguity, therefore in a subject of so much consequence, divines have been in the habit of applying the two qualifying epithets, “primary,” and “final,” to the word justification; so that primary justification is taken to signify that which a man obtains, either when he first embraces Christianity, or generally, on his sincere repentance after sin; and by final justification is intended Justification at the time of death, or in the day of judgment, which will be inevitably followed by salvation. Again—the word “faith” has many distinct senses in Scripture, two of which must be here noticed; sometimes it is put for the whole Christian doctrine,† and includes therefore both the belief and practice required of a Christian; sometimes, and more frequently, it stands for belief only.‡ The two propositions then, to which we lately alluded, as necessary to be examined in the present argument, are constructed by joining the word faith in its latter signification with the two senses of the word justification already remarked, and, when affirmatively stated, they will run thus :

Primary Justification is by belief;

Final Justification is by belief.

Now both these propositions are included in that general one,

\* As in the following passages—Ps. 143. ii.—Is. 53. xi.—Acts 13. xxxix.—Rom. 3. xxiv. xxviii. and 5. ix. xvi.—Gal. 2. xxi. and 3. viii.

† As in Acts 24. xxiv.—Gal. 1. xxiii.—I Tim. 1. ii.

‡ As in Rom. 4. xix.—James 2. xxiv.—II Cor. 5. vii.

“Justification is by Faith,” and yet, understanding them of the *conditions* of Justification, neither of them is *strictly* true, and one is perfectly false.

For first, it is not strictly true that even primary Justification is by faith, to the utter exclusion of good works, as a condition. This is evident from the practice of the first preachers of Christianity, and of their divine Master, who uniformly called upon men every where to repent as well as to believe the Gospel, in order that their “sins might be blotted out;”\* and he, who came to “prepare the way of the Lord,” required “fruits meet for repentance,”† as a necessary qualification for obtaining the blessings of the Messiah’s kingdom. This is a mere matter of *fact*, which will admit of no dispute, and our opponents therefore cannot deny it; they deny, indeed, and so do we, that repentance is the meritorious cause of primary justification; but we think they likewise agree with us in holding that it is an indispensable qualification in the subject of primary justification. We agree likewise as to the qualifications necessary for obtaining a *restoration* to a state of justification, when it has been forfeited by sin; they being allowed on all hands to be the same as those required for the first *admission* into such a state.

We trust therefore that we are in perfect unison on these points; but, after all, it is our firm opinion that the notions actually propagated, and intended to be propagated, by evangelical discourses on the doctrine of Justification by faith, refer not to primary but to final justification, that is, *salvation*; and moreover, not to the meritorious cause of salvation, nor to the medium, by which its benefits are conveyed to us, but to the conditions of salvation. Now what, according to the sense of Scripture, are the conditions of *salvation* on the part of man, the whole of the Scriptures from one end to the other are one continued proof; we might really dip into the New Testament at random, and from any one page we happened to

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\* Matt. 4. xvii.—Mark 6. xii.—Acts 2. xxxviii, and 3. xix.

† Matt. 3. viii.

pitch upon, might satisfactorily prove that plainest of all doctrines, that faith and good works are *both* absolutely necessary to procure us admission to the happiness of heaven : if, however, some specific authority be desired, a single passage of the apostle James will answer the purpose most completely ; “ What doth it profit,” he asks, “ though a man say he hath faith, and have not works ; can faith save him ?” \* Both faith and works, therefore, are indispensable conditions of final justification, or salvation.

We are now arrived at the main point, to which our remarks have been tending, namely, to enter on an investigation of the opinions of our opponents on the qualifications requisite for *salvation* ; and we heartily wish we could say, that, as our notions on that subject appear unevangelical to them, theirs did not in return appear unscriptural to us. Such, however, is the fact ; for there are reasons to be produced, which make it *more* than probable, that they think *final* justification, and therefore salvation, is attainable by faith alone, in such a sense as to exclude the necessity of good works as an essential condition. It must be distinctly understood, and therefore we repeat it, that we are not speaking of the meritorious cause of our salvation ; we are both most fully agreed that it is “ the blood of Jesus Christ alone which cleanseth us from all sin,” and that it is in virtue of his atonement only that any of us can hope to see salvation. The question between us is merely this—is the performance of good works on our part indispensably necessary to salvation, or not. We have attributed the latter opinion to our opponents, and we now proceed to shew on what grounds.

The notion we have formed respecting their sentiments on this point, will derive *some*, although a *low* degree of probability, from the following consideration. It is very certain Mr. Wesley taught that salvation is attainable by faith

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\* James 2. xiv.



alone,\* as the following passages from his sermons will be sufficient to evince;—"by the sacrifice for sin made by the second Adam, God is so far reconciled to the world that he hath given them a new covenant, the plain condition whereof being *once* fulfilled, there is no more condemnation for us."† Again—"the covenant of grace requires *only* faith:† lastly;—"if thou endurest to the end *believing* in Jesus, thou shalt never taste the second death."‡ Now, as Mr. Wesley was the undoubted founder of the modern evangelical school, there is an antecedent probability that his disciples of the present day adhere to him in this opinion, as they are known to do in many others.

However, let us endeavour to extract their sentiments from a more authentic source. What then is the common topic of eulogium in their public ministerial discourses: is it the excellence, the utility, or the necessity of good works, or is it not rather *faith*, which in their estimation and by their account is every thing, the beginning and the end, the first and the last? Do we then desire to vilify faith, or to deny the truth of the very excellent things, which may and ought to be ascribed to it? God forbid. We acknowledge that faith is the very soul of the Christian; it is the light that cheers him, the fire that warms him, the cordial that supports him, the compass that steers him, in the perilous passage through this life to another. Thus far then our opponents and ourselves go hand in hand together, but here they seem inclined to desert us: *they* commonly stop short when they have laid the foundation; *we* endeavour to raise a suitable edifice upon it: *they* seem to think their business ended when they have constructed the machinery; *we* think it a farther duty to set it in motion, on works which are "good and profitable"

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\* We use the word *faith*, both here and elsewhere, in its common meaning, as signifying mere belief.

† Sermon on Justification by Faith.

‡ Sermon on the Righteousness of Faith.

to the soul. In short, so great is the preponderance they give to the *principle* of holiness, that holiness itself is defrauded of its due, and virtually, at least, they "make void the law" of righteousness through their representations of faith.

The allegation we have made may be farther supported, by observing the manner in which our opponents commonly treat and speak of good works when they *do* introduce them. Sometimes they appear willing to consider them as very ornamental appendages of faith, and even useful, in a *certain* sense; but it more frequently happens that, while faith stalks triumphantly over the scene, and arrests the eye of every one by her magnitude and splendour, moral obedience, attired in the guise of a menial servant, is removed to such a respectful distance that no one thinks of looking after her, or could even see her if he did, without some trouble; perhaps, towards the conclusion of the business, this degraded character may be allowed just to move and speak, but so little concern has she had with the main action of the piece, that she is necessarily regarded as a very insipid sort of personage, whose presence might be spared without any material inconvenience, and possibly without being missed. We will not assert that there is *always* in the discourses of our evangelical brethren such a vast disproportion between the respective importance of faith and works as is implied in the above comparison; but we *do* contend that at all times, and under the most favourable circumstances, there is a certain *lubricity* in their statements on the subject of good works, which makes it almost impossible to handle them for the purpose of discovering what they really contain. Evangelical divines do certainly sometimes recommend good works, but then in the very same breath they vehemently disparage them; they sometimes affirm that they are necessary to salvation, but they immediately subjoin a reason for their opinion which virtually does away that necessity altogether.\* In particular, they seem to have a mortal

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\* This will be more fully explained presently.

antipathy to calling good works a *condition* of salvation, and yet it is not easy to see the reason of this strong disgust, with which they regard a term, not only perfectly harmless and very convenient, but also the most appropriate in its present application that could well be devised agreeably to the received usage of our language, for as, according to the current sense of words, the *condition* of obtaining any thing is that without which it cannot be obtained, it must follow that good works are a condition of salvation, for the apostle has told us expressly that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."\* The only cause, that we can possibly assign, for this invincible dislike, is that they conceive the term, condition, implies somewhat of a meritorious title; an opinion, for which we can perceive no foundation whatever, because an act of grace and mercy on the part of God, which he was under no manner of obligation to perform, must be equally a free and gracious act on his part, whether he performs it conditionally or unconditionally. This aversion of our opponents, however, is the more remarkable, as they themselves occasionally employ a term, as nearly as can be synonymous with that, which they so uniformly and indignantly reject; for they have no objection sometimes to speak of good works as a *qualification* for salvation. And, if they would only be consistent, and adhere to this term, which they have selected, they and we should probably come to a speedy agreement on the nature of good works, and the reason of their necessity; but here is the misfortune; the moment they are requested to state in what sense good works are necessary, they no longer say, as qualifications for salvation, but, correcting their former language, as if inaccurate, or at least not sufficiently precise for formal disquisition, they give an account of the matter utterly different, as we shall see more fully hereafter.

But, before we proceed farther, we cannot but remark that the mode, in which our opponents treat the subject of faith

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\* Heb. 12. xiv.

and works, is wonderfully *different* from that which the apostles adopted and pursued. It is true that when those inspired messengers of heaven addressed themselves to unbelievers, they insisted almost exclusively on the necessity of faith, and directed all their arguments to the proof of this single point, that "Jesus is the Christ." This was evidently the natural and necessary course for them to take in *that* stage of their ministerial labours; they were, of course, obliged to *establish* the Christian principle of action, before they could attempt to *use* it. But now observe what a different language they hold towards professed Christians; in all their writings directed to the faithful the grand topic of their exhortations is the performance of good works, a subject to which all others are made subservient: they occasionally discuss and determine cases of controversy, on which their opinion had been either asked, or was necessary to be known; they caution their converts against the different errors, to which, from the circumstances of the times, they were chiefly exposed; and they sometimes give directions in matters of discipline, for the regulation of the infant churches; but, as soon as ever they have dispatched these occasional concerns, they return with avidity to their *principal* object,—that of explaining minutely the various branches of Christian duty, and of enforcing them on the principles and motives supplied by the Christian faith. This assertion cannot, of course, be proved by detached quotations, but it will be abundantly apparent on a perusal of any one of the apostolic epistles, and then considering the general tenour and complexion of the whole. Such then was the ministerial practice of the apostles, in which we think they are by no means so closely imitated by the evangelical teachers of the present day, as by those of their brethren, to whom they deny the character of faithful ministers of the Gospel.

To return now to the point from which we deviated.—Hitherto we have advanced certain facts, which merely render it *probable* that our opponents hold the opinion we have imputed to them on the necessity of good works; we have now to produce another reason, which, to us at least, makes the matter

*certain, and it is this, that they assert good works are necessary to salvation only as evidences of faith.\**

Now, though we deny *this* proposition, we admit that good works *are* evidences of faith, and that they are incalculably useful, even in that point of view. To the Christian himself, who possesses that living faith, which demonstrates its reality and efficacy by the fruits of holiness it produces, such evidences form the most invaluable part of all his earthly treasures, for, conjoined with the testimony of a good conscience, they afford him the comfortable assurance that he is in the road to heaven, and that he will at length infallibly attain it if he perseveres in the path, which he is already treading. And farther, the beauty of holiness, depicted in the conduct of a faithful Christian, is calculated to excite the love, and admiration, and imitation of the world; and thus other men, by our good works, which they shall behold, may be led to glorify in a similar manner, our Father which is in heaven.

But our opponents go much farther than this when they tell us that good works are necessary to salvation only as evidences of faith. On this declaration then we take our stand, for we shall now attempt to shew that, if good works are only necessary for *this* purpose, they *are* not, and *cannot* be, necessary at all.

Evidence of all kinds, by its very nature and meaning, has a

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\* This is a truth so perfectly notorious, that it can hardly be requisite to bring any proofs in attestation of it. We will only therefore give the following passage as a specimen of those which might be offered on this occasion: it is from the pen of the learned biographer of the late Rev. Joseph Milner:—"How vehement was his eloquence, how unwearied his diligence, in repeatedly urging the necessity of good works to prove the soundness of the tree. How pointedly distinct and guarded were his instructions in assigning to the fruits their right place in the Christian scheme, that is, in shewing that they are the evidence of a vital union with the Saviour, not the ground of acceptance before God." Page 47.

relation to something extraneous to itself, and its only use is to prove the existence of some separate, independent fact, of which it is produced *as* the evidence; consequently any evidence of a given kind *may* become unnecessary, and *will* be so when the fact can be proved *without* it, for it is the existence of the fact which alone is necessary to be established. To apply this reasoning to the present case: God is the sole Disposer of salvation, and good works are only necessary to salvation as evidences of faith; therefore if God can be satisfied of the existence of faith without such evidences, they must be altogether unnecessary to *him*; and God, we know, has in his own omniscience a source of light and knowledge, infinitely superior to them all.

Neither can good works be necessary in this sense to the man himself, whose salvation is to be decided on; for he will be saved if *God* is satisfied of his faith, whether he *himself* has any proof of its reality or not; such proof might be very convenient to him, and would be very comfortable, but it cannot be *necessary*; his faith need only be approved to God, and every thing requisite to his salvation is completely attained. And, as this is true of *any one* individual, it is true of the whole human race.

If, therefore, good works are necessary to salvation as evidences of faith neither to God nor man, the only parties concerned, and if there be no other purpose for which they are necessary to salvation, it follows that they are altogether *unnecessary* to salvation.

In confirmation of this argument it is curious to observe how much our opponents appear to be perplexed by those passages of Scripture, which declare that good works will be taken into account as a most important ground of decision at the tribunal of the last day, where they cannot possibly be wanted as evidences of faith for the reason just now assigned. We are told repeatedly in holy writ that we shall be judged and rewarded according to our works; and, in that sublime and affecting account of the proceedings of the last day, which is

given in St. Matthew's Gospel,\* they, who in their life-time had omitted to perform acts of charity and mercy, from a principle of faith in Christ, and in obedience to his commands, are condemned to everlasting punishment; while the righteous, who had performed them, are rewarded with life eternal. Now the meaning of all this is so perfectly clear, that we are convinced there is no man of common understanding, who would not naturally deduce from it, of his own accord, the momentous truth it was designed to teach, that is, that, if we believe in Christ and keep his commandments, we shall be saved, and, if not, that we shall perish. Here, however, certain *distinctions* are introduced by our opponents, with no other effect, that we can see, than to obscure a subject extremely plain in itself; their comment on this and similar passages of Scripture is, that we shall be saved, not *for*, but *according to our works*; the first part of this affirmation is, we suppose, intended to exclude good works from being the meritorious cause of our salvation, and, if so, it is readily admitted: as to the last part, if it be meant as a concise summary of the doctrine, which they sometimes propound more explicitly, that good works are necessary to salvation only as evidences of faith, we have already attempted to point out its absurdity; and if it mean any thing else, we profess we cannot understand it. If our opponents would in this instance comply with the good advice given in the Articles of our Church, exhorting her members to receive the truths of the Gospel "in such wise as they be *generally* set forth to us in Holy Scripture,"† and if they will therefore barely admit that good works are necessary to salvation because God has commanded them, (which is surely a very *sufficient* reason,) a firm support will then be laid for our future and farther agreement; or, if they will not be satisfied without assigning some additional reason for this necessity, such a reason may be extracted from the unexceptionable language, in which they themselves sometimes speak of good

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\* Matt. 25, 31.

† Art. XVII.

works, when they call them *qualifications* for salvation, since this term will imply that the dispositions and habits of holiness are necessary to qualify us for the *enjoyment* of future happiness, a proposition which is undeniably true. But whatever *other* ground our opponents may chuse to assume, on which to defend the necessity of good works, this, at all events, we must be allowed to think, that they cannot possibly continue where they *are* ; they must either produce some other reason, than any they have yet advanced, for the necessity of good works, or else they must fairly own that no such necessity exists.

It was, no doubt, a very commendable motive, which induced our opponents to take up the opinion, which we have now been endeavouring to confute ; the motive evidently was a desire to exclude good works from having any share in the merit of our salvation, but this intention, unfortunately pursued with too much eagerness, has not only, as we have seen, led them into error, but also into palpable inconsistency ; for, while they exalt faith to the skies, and thrust obedience down to the lower parts of the earth, they seem to forget that it is quite as unscriptural to consider faith the meritorious cause of our salvation, as it is to assign that distinction to good works ; it is not what we *believe* any more than what we *do*, which can give us a meritorious title to heaven, for both the one and the other would have been equally ineffectual to our salvation, but for the availing sacrifice of the Son of God ; and if faith be *not* regarded in a meritorious view, by what right can it claim the exclusive honours, which are lavished upon it by our opponents ? If therefore they would act consistently on their own principles, they must allot to *both* the instruments of our salvation, the same rank and importance in the scale of Christian duties, as the apostles and evangelists have done before them.\*

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\* The notions, which they actually entertain on this point, may be seen in the following account given by Mr. Scott of his own ministerial practice previous to his conversion :—" My preaching,"



We have already attempted to assign the *motive*, which, in our opinion, has led our opponents wrong; we will conclude with endeavouring to point out the *means*, by which they have been conducted into error. We conceive then that they imagine there is a fundamental and essential difference between a dead and a living faith, and that they suppose the latter of them, (and the latter only,) to be either identified with true faith, or, (which will amount to the same thing,) to be a necessary *consequence* of it: we here use the terms living and dead faith, exactly in the same sense as our opponents, understanding by a "living" faith, one that is productive of good works, and by a "dead" faith, one that is not; by a "true" faith, we mean correct belief. Now this, it is allowed, is *only* an hypothesis, but it is one which we are inclined to consider as well-founded, because we think it will satisfactorily solve all the phenomena, which it is required to explain: for let it only be admitted that a true faith and a living faith are one and the same thing, or that the one inevitably leads to the other, and we immediately perceive a very good reason for the practice of our opponents, in making faith the sum and substance

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he says, "was in general that smooth, palatable mixture of law and gospel, which corrupts both, by representing the gospel as a *mild-gated law*, and as accepting *sincere* instead of *perfect* obedience. This system, by flattering pride and prejudice, and soothing the conscience, pleases the careless sinner and self-righteous formalist, but does real good to none, and is in fact, a specious and unsuspected kind of Antinomianism"—*Works*, Vol. I. p. 40.

Now, all this appears to us very marvellous. We should have thought that a system, which expressly inculcates the necessity of good works, (and that too, as Mr. S. seems to think, in a superabundant degree,) is, by that very circumstance, directly and irreconcilably *opposed* to Antinomianism; and that such a system was the right one to be pursued where *perfect obedience* was required. Neither can we account for the contemptuous way in which Mr. S. and his friends are accustomed to speak of *sincerity*, unless on the supposition that they consider *hypocrisy* to be a Christian duty.

of the Gospel; for a living faith, by its definition, is always attended with good works, and, if a true faith is sure to produce a living faith, then all a Christian has to do is to set about acquiring a true faith, of which good works will be a necessary consequence. By the help of this circuitous train of reasoning, our opponents seem to have persuaded themselves that they hold the necessity of good works, (though even then it would be in a very secondary kind of sense;) the nature of their argument, when distinctly proposed, is this;—"good works, when they *do* appear, are the fruits of true faith; therefore true faith will *always* produce good works;" in order to arrive at which conclusion it is necessary to take that most illogical step of inferring that a proposition is true generally, *because* it is true in a particular instance.

Now in opposition to the opinion which goes to establish a necessary connection between faith and good works, we maintain that there is *no* essential difference between a dead and a living faith, but that they are merely modifications of one and the same principle subsisting under different degrees of intensity; that both one and the other may be equally *true* faith, and that true faith does not inevitably terminate in living faith.

First, then, the custom of the apostles, already noticed, overturns the opinion we have ascribed to our opponents, and at the same time confirms our own; for the apostles inculcate the necessity of good works *over and above*, and *in addition* to faith, even when it is a true faith, which would have been perfectly useless if good works had been necessary consequences of faith: in that case God, who does nothing in vain, would never have inspired the original ministers of the Gospel to write practical and hortatory dissertations on moral duties, which compose, however, by far the greater part of their works, and would all be, on this supposition, utterly superfluous. A true faith, therefore, *may* be a dead faith, and consequently it is not the same thing as a living faith, nor does it inevitably lead to it.

But the whole of what we have here occasion to prove on

the one side, and to disprove on the other, will be made out yet more satisfactorily by a distinct appeal to two or three passages of the apostolic writings. Now it will be clear that there is no essential difference between a dead and a living faith, if we can shew how the one may be converted *into* the other, the original constituent principle, the substratum, of true faith, remaining all the while *unaltered*. For this purpose let us consider the following passage of St. James; "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."\* Here the apostle calls that faith, which has not works, and merely *because* it has not works, a dead faith; consequently that faith, that very *same* faith in principle, if it *had* works would be no longer a dead faith; that is, a true, but at the same time a dead faith, would be thereby converted into a living faith. Lastly, (which is a most important point to attend to,) a dead faith, though it be a true one, will never *of its own accord* grow up into a living faith. This is very evident from the text we have prefixed to the present discourse; "these things," (says the apostle to his disciple in the ministry,) "these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which *have* believed in God might be *careful* to maintain good works;" in which words he affirms that even where true faith does exist, and in the utmost purity, there is need of an *additional* act of the mind and will, and a strenuous *exertion* of both, to render it a living faith and effective to salvation. St. Peter expresses himself to the same purpose, and in terms, if possible, still more decisive; having first pointed out to the early converts how their Christian profession obliged them to avoid the corruption that is in the world, he proceeds thus;—"and, besides this, giving all diligence," (σπουδὴν + πᾶσαν, words as emphatic as language

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\* James ii. 17.

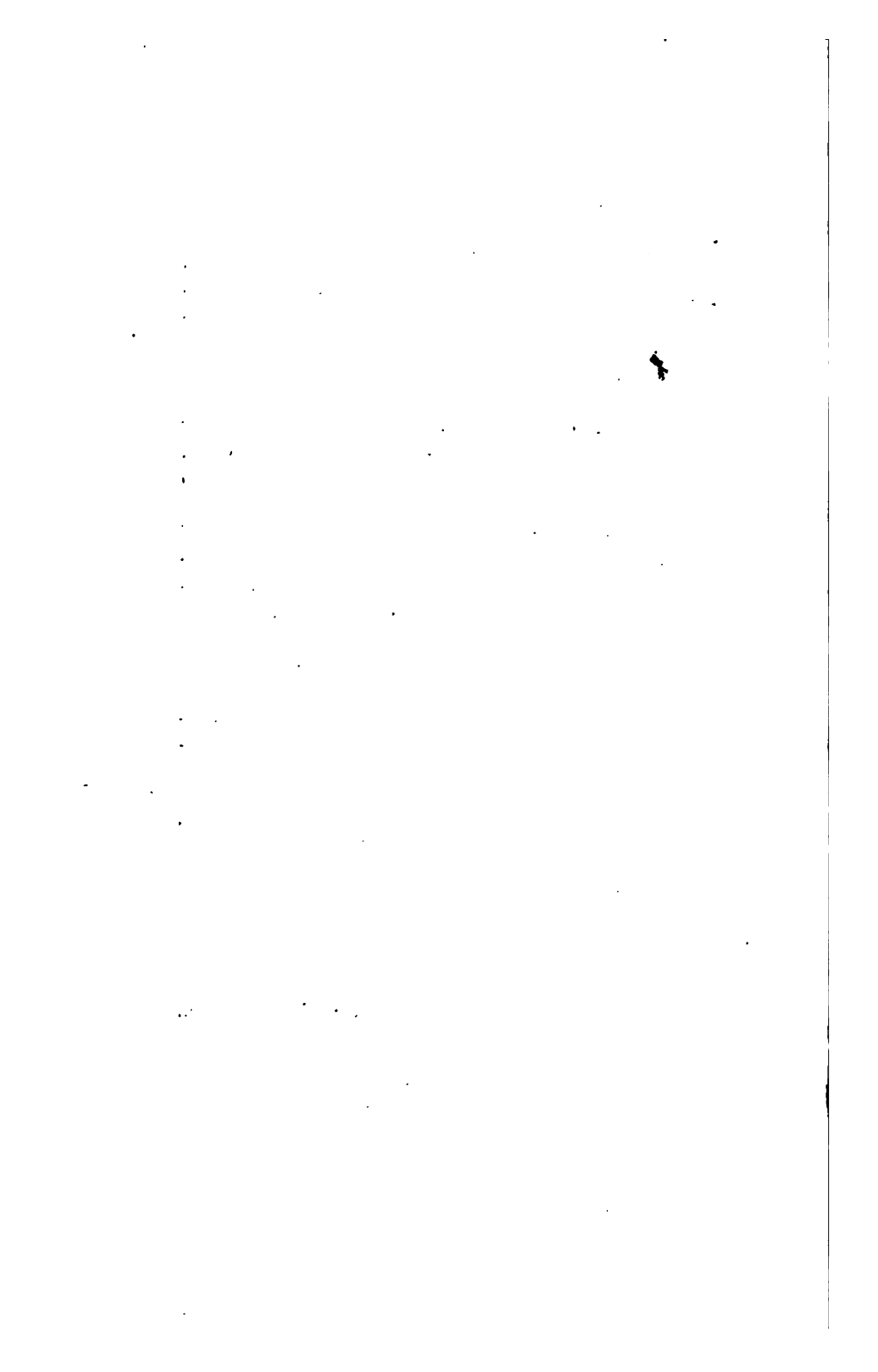
† "Σπουδῇ. It signifieth *Desire, Diligence, and Continuance*: it is sometimes translated *Study*, sometimes *Diligence*, sometimes *Solicitude, Carefulness*. All these three are scarce sufficient to express the meaning of the Greek word."—*Leigh's Critica Sacra*.

can supply,) “add to your faith virtue.”\* We see then, how utterly inefficacious even a true faith is in producing good works unless it be preserved in a vigorous state by careful meditation, and duly exercised in the ways of holiness by a positive and energetic application of the will. A true faith will be either a dead or a living faith, according to the attention we pay it, and the sincerity and earnestness, with which we follow its directions.

We think then, on the whole, that the ministers of our Church have abundant reasons, on which to defend themselves, when they preach with somewhat less frequency, and rather in different language from their evangelical brethren, the doctrine of Justification by Faith; since that doctrine, when understood in one of its principal senses, is well known and generally believed; and, when apprehended in the other of them, is perfectly erroneous, and therefore highly dangerous. If our opponents themselves believe it in this latter sense, we certainly cannot blame them for stating it in a way, which would naturally lead to such a conclusion: we on the contrary, as we *otherwise* believe, so also do we otherwise speak; and, supported, as we conceive, by the unanimous and concurrent authority of Scripture, we cease not to exhort our hearers that they “receive not the grace of God in vain,” and to warn them that, though faith in Christ be the channel, through which “the benefits of his precious blood-shedding” are conveyed into our souls, yet that something more is required to *attain* the promises than the mere act of heartily *believing* them; that our faith may be perfectly true, and at the same time perfectly unprofitable; and that it never will justify us at the dreadful day of account, unless, besides believing the record, which God hath given of his Son, we also make it the business of our lives to perform the work, which God hath given us to do.

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\* II Pet. i. 5.



# SERMON V.

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## On Final Perseverance.

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PREACHED on SUNDAY, APRIL 28.

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I CORINTHIANS 10. xii.

*Let him, that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

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ONE of the most extraordinary doctrines, which has ever been deduced from Christianity, and the most completely subversive of its spirit and object, is that, which is commonly distinguished by the name of Personal Election, of which Personal Reprobation is a necessary consequence. This opinion, where it prevails, produces mischief in two different directions; they, who suppose themselves the miserable victims of future reprobation, and only created as vessels of wrath, that the glory of God may be manifested in their final destruction, if they ever *think* of the horrid prospect that is before them, will be probably driven to desperation; or, if at such a time they can be calm enough to *reason* on their forlorn state, they may fairly derive from it this conclusion, that, since salvation is in their case absolutely impossible, and the joys of heaven can never be their's, they may as well make the most they can of their earthly existence, and freely indulge in the pleasures of sin: they, on the other hand, who imagine themselves the *favoured* subjects of the absolute decrees of

God, may draw a similar practical inference, and by rather a shorter method; for, if they read correctly the charter, which secures their salvation *at all events*, they cannot but perceive that in its fundamental articles it contains an act of plenary indulgence, vastly more extensive than any, which ever issued from that storehouse of superfluous merit, which once formed so considerable a part of the patrimony of St. Peter; for it comprehends sins of every description and magnitude, however long and pertinaciously adhered to: why then should persons, so highly privileged, be anxious about their conduct in this life, when they know they cannot *hinder* their salvation in the next; that, if they fall, they *must* rise again; that, if they sin, it *cannot* be unto death; and that, though they pass through the world immersed in "the gall of bitterness," they shall leave it triumphant spirits at the last. There was a time when our country felt, in all their force, the practical effects of these monstrous notions, a single instance of which, appearing on the face of our national annals, may suffice to exemplify their genuine tendency. When the regicide and usurper Cromwell, was approaching his end, "he began," says an elegant historian, "to cast his eye towards that future existence, whose idea had once been intimately present to him. He asked one of his preachers, if the doctrine were true that the elect could never fall, or suffer a final reprobation. "Nothing more certain," replied the preacher. "Then I am *safe*," said the protector, "for I am sure that *once* I was in a state of grace."\* Such times, we trust, are gone for ever, but the religious opinions, which peculiarly distinguished them, are by no means eradicated. We are far, however, from desiring to represent that of Personal Election, when taken in its full latitude, as a *characteristic* doctrine of that portion of our brethren, whose sentiments on other points we have lately been discussing; some of them indeed, are known to hold it, but the generality, we have no doubt, dis-

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\* Hume's History of England—Commonwealth, chap. 2.

claim it. There is, notwithstanding, a certain modification of this opinion, which, we fear, attaches itself closely to their discriminating principles, we mean that subdivision of the doctrine, which is known under the denomination of Final Perseverance, and which differs from its parent stock in the following respect—that whereas, on the system of personal election, the final destiny of every man is determined previously to his existence, that of final perseverance only undertakes to ensure it under certain conditions, and after a certain period; the doctrine of final perseverance asserts that, when a man has *once* attained to a state of *primary* justification, it *must* end in *final* justification, or salvation; this doctrine, therefore, coincides with that of personal election from a certain point, and thus, from the point where it does commence, it necessarily leads to the self-same consequences.

Let us next see on what grounds this opinion may, as we think, with some probability be ascribed to our opponents. We shall argue nothing from the general style of their writings on subjects intimately connected with this, and the impression which it is apt to leave on the mind; we allow this source of evidence is too indefinite to furnish any solid proof, which must be derived, if derived at all, from their acknowledged tenets on other points.

We have formerly examined those tenets, as they regard the qualifications necessary for salvation, and the result of our enquiry appeared to prove that, on *their* scheme, true faith, or correct belief, was the only thing indispensable in the business. Now allowing this, as long as a man retains such a faith, he will necessarily be in the way of salvation, and we really do not see how, having once acquired it, he can ever lose it; for the evidence, which originally extracted his assent, (and we all admit on sufficient authority,) that evidence remains the *same*, and must therefore at *all* times, when duly considered, be productive of the same conviction; not to mention that, for the mere preservation of belief, it will not be necessary to re-consider the grounds of it at all, unless any doubts should arise in the mind. And if it be said that assent



is regulated by inclination as well as evidence, we grant the fact, and it will turn to our account; for a man, who expects to be saved on the easy terms of simple believing, will have every possible inducement to *give* his assent, and no imaginable motive for *withholding* it; men sometimes *do* feel a disinclination to believe that the doctrine is of God, when they think the reception of it will oblige them to do the *will* of God, and thereby occasionally to oppose the dictates of sense and appetite; but a person will necessarily be convinced, on sufficient evidence, when he will lose nothing by it, and gain every thing. For these reasons we think that the opinion of the sufficiency of faith to salvation entails the doctrine of final perseverance.

Again.—In all their accounts of Regeneration, our opponents speak of it as a *single* event; they never seem to allow the possibility of a *second* regeneration, and indeed, if they did, the effects they attribute to the first would lose much of their extraordinary nature. But, if they allow of no second regeneration, one of these two things must, on their principles, necessarily follow,—either that a man, when he once falls from a state of grace, must be inevitably lost for ever, or else that he can never fall at all; now we have reason to believe that they do not entertain the first of these opinions, and therefore we imagine they hold the latter.

But whether or not these considerations may be supposed to afford a sufficient ground for charging the opinion of final perseverance on our opponents *generally*, there is a portion of them who openly profess it, and there is cause to fear that their number is increasing. On these accounts we think a brief examination of *this* doctrine may form no improper sequel to the notice we have already taken of some others.

In any point of controversy, where arguments of considerable strength may be advanced on both sides, it may be necessary, or at least desirable, to take both a negative and positive view of the subject; we mean, both to reply to the arguments produced in favour of the question, which we mean to *disprove*, and also to state the direct evidence on the side

of that, which we mean to establish. In the present instance, however, we conceive the case to be so very clear, that it would be perfectly unnecessary to enter upon so wide a field of argument; we shall therefore content ourselves with submitting to your notice the positive authorities of Scripture, which disprove the doctrine of final perseverance. These authorities may be classed under two heads :

1st. The declarations, admonitions, promises, and threatenings of Scripture, which prove the possibility of a person falling totally, and, (without his own exertions to prevent it,) finally, from a state of grace.

2dly. The examples, which Scripture supplies, of persons, to whom that event has really happened.

1. To begin with the first of these heads of evidence :

In the prophet Ezekiel are the following words :—" when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."\* To the production of this text perhaps an exception may be taken of the following nature; it may be said that this is a description of God's dealings with mankind under the old dispensation, and is, therefore, inapplicable to the spiritual circumstances of Christians. We answer that, since the attributes of God are immutably the same, so must be also the dispositions he entertains towards moral merit and demerit, and consequently the *general* principle of his dealings with men in relation to their moral character. This is allowed and supposed by the apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews, where he proposes the lives and conduct, not only of the patriarchs under the old dispensation, but of all the holy men, which have been since the world began, as examples for the imitation of Christians; † from which it undeniably follows

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\* Ezek. 18. xxiv.

† Heb. chap. 11. throughout.

that moral actions, of the same kind, are respectively pleasing or displeasing to God in *all* ages; and, indeed, if this were not the case, so far would the Scriptures of the Old Testament be from deserving the character given of them by the same apostle, of being “able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus,”\* that they would be absolutely useless to Christians. Supposing therefore the objection to this text sufficiently removed, let us now proceed to use it. The righteous man here mentioned was manifestly, while he continued such, in a state of favour and acceptance with God, for it is promised to him, a few verses before, that he “shall surely live.” Now of this same righteous man it is supposed, in the text itself, that he not only *may* turn away from righteousness, and commit iniquity, but the consequences of his doing so are clearly declared, namely, that “he shall die;” and, as he would equally die by the common course of *nature*, whether he were righteous or wicked, the death here meant can only be the second death. And, farther, as it would be absurd to threaten a punishment, which by the nature of the case, could never be inflicted, it was therefore possible for the man, who had turned away from righteousness, to persevere in iniquity to the end of his life, and thus to incur the *execution* of the sentence here denounced against apostacy. But we need not enter into any argument to prove this point, for the prophet, in the next verse but one, absolutely assures us of its truth. “When a righteous man,” he says, “turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and *dieth* in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.”

Again.—In the explication, given by our blessed Lord, of the parable of the sower, is to be found the following clause: “he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while, for, when

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\* II Tim. 3. xv.

tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”\* This text then goes a step farther than the last in one respect, for it proves that even the faithful disciple of *Christ* may fall from his steadfastness, and indeed that such cases are not uncommon.

Still stronger in our favour is the following passage from the epistle to the Hebrews:—“ It is impossible for those, who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if *they* shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.”† A minute explanation of the various particulars comprized in this text would detain us too long, nor is it at all necessary to our present purpose; we have merely cited it to prove that a person, in a state of justification and grace, may fall from that state totally and finally; and this point it establishes completely, for it tells us that Christians, who have the highest right and title to that character, who have made considerable advancement in the virtues proper to their profession, who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the powers of the world to come,—that even they *may* fall away, and that too so *entirely*, that, in the strong language of the apostle, “ it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance;” which words, though they do not imply an absolute impossibility, must in their lowest sense denote the extreme *difficulty* of effecting the recovery of such persons.—A text from St. Peter, precisely of the same import, may serve still farther to illustrate that, which we have just noticed. “ If,” says this apostle, (with reference to some of the converts whom he was addressing)—“ if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning;”‡ and why *should* their latter end be worse than

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\* Matt. 13. xx, xxi.    † Heb. 6. iv—vi.    ‡ II Pet. 2. xx.

the beginning, unless there was a possibility, and indeed a *probability*, of its being followed by *perdition*? if final perseverance were true, *every* stage and condition of a man's life after he had once been in a state of grace, would be equally *good* to him, because equally *safe*. The apostle, however, has determined this question to our hands, for he positively affirms that real Christians may not only be again "entangled" in the pollutions of the world, but also "*overcome*" by them.

The exhortations of Scripture to a perseverance in faith and holiness, the promises annexed to it, and the punishment denounced against defection, are so exceedingly numerous that we can barely read the following as a specimen :—" Watch ye, stand *fast* in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."\*—" Give diligence to make your calling and election *sure*."†—" Let us therefore *fear*, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come *short* of it."‡—" Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, *fall* from your own steadfastness."§—" *Quench* not the Spirit."||—" We are not of them who *draw back* unto *perdition*, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."¶—" Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life."\*\*—" Behold the goodness and severity of God ; on them which fell, severity, but towards thee goodness, if thou *continue* in his goodness, otherwise *thou* also shalt be *cut off*."††—Now, if the doctrine of final perseverance be true, what is the meaning of all these texts and a hundred more of the same kind that might be cited? they are really nothing else than a solemn *mockery* of mankind in the most important of all concerns,—their relations to God and to eternity! Well may we here adopt the comment of

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\* I Cor. 16. xiii.—† II Pet. 1. x.—‡ Heb. 4. i.—§ II Pet. 3. xvii.—|| I Thess. 5. xix.—¶ Heb. 10. xxxix.

\*\* Rev. 2. x.

†† Rom. 11. xxii.

Grotius on one of the passages just produced; "*pestilentes sunt magistri, qui negant id fieri posse, quod Deus et fieri posse, et graviter a se puniri testatur.*"\*

2.—To be further convinced of the possibility of falling from a state of justification and grace, into one which *may* end in final reprobation, let us, in the next place, briefly notice some instances of the fact, with which Scripture will supply us. There can be no doubt that David was in a state of acceptance with God, before he polluted himself with those horrid enormities, which he committed in the matter of Uriah; and, if he had continued in that guilty condition, it is equally clear what his sentence would have been at the bar of that righteous God, who will "render to every man according to his deeds," for a case of more flagrant and aggravated wickedness than that of David it is scarcely possible to conceive. It will be asserted, however, by Calvinists, that David was predestinated to repent. We reply this is a *mere* assertion, and that it is contradicted, as well generally by the texts we have quoted, as by one of them, most particularly bearing on the case. The apostle observes that, "what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law;"† therefore, what Ezekiel said under the law is applicable to David, who was under the law; and the prophet not only, as we have seen, pronounces, in the name of God, a sentence of condemnation on the man, who had been righteous, and had fallen away into iniquity, but he uniformly speaks of the return of such a person to his former state as an event, not certain, but conditional,—conditional, that is, on his own reflections and exertions, under the concurring aid, (which is of course supposed,) of the grace of God;‡ and he even declares explicitly that it is an event which might possibly *never* happen.

\* Grotius in Ezek. 18. 24.

† Rom. 3. xix.

‡ The prophet does not say, (as he ought to do on the system of Final Perseverance,) "when the wicked is *driven* back, with or without his own consent," but—"if the wicked *will turn* &c."—See Ezek. 18. xxi.

In farther confirmation of our argument let us consider the following extract from the New Testament.\* “ This charge,” says St. Paul to Timothy, “ I commit unto thee, that thou mightest war the good warfare ; holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck ; of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan.” The two persons then here mentioned *had* been in a state of grace, for the apostle asserts they had *put off* a good conscience, and by so doing, had made shipwreck of faith, or had fallen entirely from the Christian profession, and lost its benefits. By the nature of the case then this their latter state was one of reprobation ; and that it *might* have ended in perdition, is proved by the method St. Paul took to reclaim them. He tells us that he had delivered them to Satan, or had excommunicated them, and in another of his epistles† he explains the object of such a sentence towards those, on whom it was inflicted, to be this, that, by producing repentance in them, “ the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus ;” consequently there was, to say the least, a *possibility*, (which is all we have occasion to prove,) that the souls of the two persons, who had here incurred this sentence, and who had both been in a state of grace, might *not* be saved in the day of the Lord : nor do we know that in point of fact they ever *did* recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.

But, not to accumulate unnecessary authorities in a case which appears already abundantly clear, let us only notice one more, which could not well be classed under either of the former heads, as partaking somewhat of the nature of both, but which of itself might serve as an adequate substitute for every thing they contain. That model of every thing that is great and good in the Christian character, the apostle of the Gentiles ; he, for whom an astonishing miracle had been wrought to bring him out of darkness into light ; he, who was in nothing

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\* I Tim. 1. xix, xx.

† I Cor. 5. v.

behind the very chiefest apostles, and in labours more abundant than them all; nay he, who was once caught up into heaven, and heard the unspeakable words of its glorified inhabitants, even he declares of himself—"I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, *I myself* should be a *cast-away*."\*

In the present subject we need go no farther, for they, whom this last passage, (which seems as if written for the very purpose,) may fail to convince of the falsity of the doctrine of final perseverance, as they must be proof against every other argument, so neither, do we think, "would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" to teach them.

And, if the doctrine of final perseverance be untrue, it will follow, as an inference well worth stating, though not immediately connected with our argument, that those of personal election and reprobation must also be equally unfounded; for if no one, under any circumstances, is in this life perfectly *secure* of salvation, no one can be absolutely *predestinated* to salvation: neither therefore can any one be absolutely predestinated to final reprobation, for it is merely the election of *some*, which can cause the reprobation of *others*.

In concluding our remarks on the doctrine of Final Perseverance, we at the same time terminate the examination, we proposed to institute, of the principal points in controversy between ourselves, and a certain class of the members of our Church. While each of those subjects was separately under discussion, we endeavoured to support, by appropriate arguments, the positions we maintain respecting it; we will now beg leave to propose one general test, which we have already partially applied, and by which as we believe, the truth of these contradictory opinions may be respectively and fairly tried. Of two different systems of faith, we suppose *that* will

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\* 1 Cor. 9. xxvii.



be allowed to be the most agreeable to the sense of Scripture, which has the most obvious tendency to promote the interests of piety and virtue among men ; and we leave you to judge whether they are likely to be most advanced, under *that* system, which sinks the nature of God's rational creatures many degrees below that of the beast that perisheth ; which represents man as utterly forsaken of all good, wholly given up to all manner of evil, and incapable even of comprehending by his natural faculties wherein *consists* his duty to God and to his fellow creatures,—or that which describes him, as fallen indeed from the high estate, in which he was originally created, possessing turbulent passions, and sinful propensities, and placed in a world where he is surrounded by innumerable temptations, but yet perfectly competent to know his duty, to hear and to obey the voice of conscience, and to perform all that is required of him from the abilities, and opportunities, and advantages, which God has been pleased to give him : *that* system again, which leads to the conclusion, that men are snatched at once, they know not how, from a state of blindness and depravity to one of illumination and sanctification,—or that, which tells them that though, on becoming members of the Christian Church, they receive such spiritual endowments as are necessary for noviciates in the Christian warfare, they must continually *exercise* them, “ as good soldiers of Jesus Christ,” and keep bright their accoutrements, and add to their number, till they have acquired the panoply of heaven ;—*that* system, which virtually denies the necessity of good works to salvation, or that which requires them as an indispensable condition : *that* system, lastly, which seems to consider the faithful as kept in a state of final indefectibility, by the absolute decrees, and irresistible agency of God,—or that, which cries with a warning voice, “ let him, that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,” for “ whosever hath,” and diligently improves his store, “ to him shall be given,” but from him that “ hath not,” nor is anxious to obtain, “ from him shall be taken away even that, which he seemeth to have.”

We might have added certain *minor* articles to the catalogue

of objectionable tenets, (as we conceive them,) which are professed by our opponents ; but we waive all discussion on those secondary subjects, both because they *are* secondary, and because, to borrow a forensic phrase, they do not appear in evidence before us ; we merely testify to that which we have seen and heard, nor can it be necessary to wander abroad in quest of proper topics of animadversion, when so many have of late been brought home to our notice.

In conclusion, let us briefly state the motives, which have engaged us in the present disquisition, and the principles, on which we have endeavoured to conduct it.

Controversy in theology is, like war in civil life, a very *great*, though sometimes a very *necessary* evil. But, whatever may be thought of the justifiableness of commencing an attack in either case, the right of opposing one will not at least be doubted. Of this right then we claim the full benefit, for you are our witnesses, that in the present instance we were not the aggressors ; it must be still fresh in the recollection of every one, that when we first re-assembled in the current academic year, after a premature separation occasioned by certain awful events,\* which might, one should think, have reminded us all that there was better employment for us, during the short and uncertain time of our sojourning here, than to waste it in strifes, and debates, and questions ;—at that moment, while we were waiting to hear the accents of Christian meekness, an alarm was sounded in the sanctuary of God ; we looked to those, who should have spoken peace to us, and behold they were making themselves ready for battle. We heard with sincere regret, and not with regret *alone*, all the controverted points again brought forward which have so long agitated and divided us ; we heard opinions, in themselves objectionable, proposed in terms as objectionable as could well be chosen ; we heard imputations indirectly cast upon our brethren, which we

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\* The facts here alluded to are sufficiently known to the world from the publication of Mr. Okes's pamphlet.

are convinced they do not merit ; and we heard one of the most sacred institutions of the Gospel treated with such perfect levity as actually to be made the foundation of a *joke*.\* Some of these assaults were made openly, some more in the way of mining ; sometimes the bolt descended on our heads, mantled in all the terrors of the storm ; and sometimes it fell, when we least expected it, amid the gentle dew from heaven. Such was the nature of an attack which we never anticipated, and in its very outset † it displayed a stratagem, which might be sometimes very successful, if it were not quite so common ; for those unhappy people, who might perchance think differently from our opponents, were set down, without farther ado, as “ vain disputers of this world,” and as persons, whose understandings were perverted by the just judgements of God ! This is certainly *one* mode of silencing argument, but in the face of this formidable artillery of anathemas, of the genuine manufacture of the *Vatican*, we have ventured to question the accuracy of certain principles of our opponents ; for, as long as we believe we have the word of God to support us, we need not fear the high-sounding words of man.

And not only the justice of the cause we have engaged in, but the peculiar importance of defending it in *this* place, have supplied us with a motive sufficiently powerful to carry us into a province rather foreign to us, and which we have no inclination to tread any longer than may be necessary. If our opponents would make a distinction, equally consistent, as we think, with prudence and honour, this our public temple might be, what it ought to be, a temple of *peace* ; if they would confine their *peculiar* doctrines to the proper scene of their *private* ministry, we should have nothing else to do, in that behalf, than to unite our hearty prayers with their's, that

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\* Mr. Simeon told us that, according to *our* notions of Baptism, we might date Regeneration by the Parish-Register !

† The passage, to which we allude, was contained, (if we remember right,) in the *first* of Mr. Simeon's sermons,

they might be enabled so to labour, as to save both their own souls, and the souls of them that hear them: and if again, in addressing us in our collective capacity, they would adhere to doctrines, in which we all *agree*, instead of uniformly selecting those, in which we *differ*, both they and we might jointly contribute to promote the grand and final object of the Christian ministry, the “edifying of ourselves in love.” While, however, they will *reverse* this order of things, (at least in one particular,) we cannot remain silent and inactive, for *here* we have a sacred deposit to protect, which, by the blessing of God, we never will desert—the principles of the *youth* entrusted to our care, the rudiments of their own happiness, the future fountain of opinion to the community at large.

The nature of the cause we have been defending, and the motive, which induced us to take it up, have likewise suggested and regulated the mode of conducting it. The discovery and illustration of truth was our object, and we have endeavoured to attain it by patient investigation and reasoning. It may have been observed perhaps that in our citation of authorities, we have studiously refrained from using the public formularies of our Church; we have occasionally had recourse to them in the way of illustration, but we have never taken them as a ground of argument. There were two reasons, which inclined us to adhere to this rule. In the first place, many of the official documents of our Church are capable of great latitude of interpretation, being drawn up in very general terms; and, as each party would naturally affix his own sense to them, they did not seem likely to furnish a criterion of conclusive authority in the questions we have been now considering; an opinion, which we think has been fully confirmed by experience. But, farther than this; great as are our veneration and esteem for the decisions of our Church, there *is* an authority, which, even in the opinion of its members and ministers, must far outweigh them all—the infallible word of God. To this in the *first* instance it is our bounden duty to refer, and, *when* we have ascertained, but not *before*,

whether the sentiments of our opponents or ourselves are most agreeable to Scripture, then will be the time to set about determining, which of them are most in unison with the doctrines of the Church. On this account we must particularly request our opponents to remember that any appeal on their side to Articles and Homilies will be perfectly irrelevant in the present state of the question between us ; on reason and Scripture alone have we argued, by reason and Scripture alone can we be confuted.

It is difficult for *us* to make any remarks on the *spirit*, with which our enquiries have been managed ; we trust, however, it has not been of an unchristian character ; if we have sometimes spoken in strong language, it was from the necessity of making ourselves clearly understood ; if we have occasionally manifested any symptoms of warmth, it was, in general, not so much from indignation as from interest. There are two evils, however, to which controversialists are peculiarly liable ; the one is that of overstating the sentiments of their opponents, and the other, that of partially misrepresenting their own, by going farther, in the heat of discussion, than they would chuse to do in moments of coolness. We are not conscious of having erred in either of these respects, but, knowing the infirmity of human nature, we will not positively assert it ; this, however, we distinctly promise, that, if our opponents conceive we have done them any injustice, and will convince us of the fact by competent proof, we will willingly afford them ample amends ; and, if they can satisfactorily shew us the fallacy of any of our own arguments, we will acknowledge the mistake, and thank them for the information, for we have entered the lists, not from a desire of victory, but a sense of duty ; we “ strive not for the mastery,” but we would “ contend earnestly” for the *truth*,—the truth, “ as it was once delivered to the saints,” the truth, “ as it is in Jesus.”

How far our efforts for that purpose may have succeeded, it is not for us to conjecture ; we only ask for, (what indeed from *this* assembly we feel confident of obtaining,) a just and candid consideration of our positions and our arguments ; *we* also

have spoken as to wise men, and we invite you to judge what *we* likewise have said.\* From those, especially, on whose account we have been *principally* induced to assume the weapons of spiritual warfare, we are the more anxious to secure a calm investigation of our principles, because in the morning of life, under the fervid impulse of imagination and feeling, we are too apt to act first and think afterwards. Be persuaded then, we entreat you,† before you embrace, on the strong representations of their zealous advocates, a system of opinions, which may materially influence your highest interests,—be persuaded to weigh the evidence on the *other* side, which we have now attempted to set before you; imitate the conduct of the noble-minded Bereans, and, with the Bible in your hands, and sincerity in your hearts, “search the Scriptures, whether these things are so.”‡ But if, (as must indeed at present be the case with most of you,) your immediate duty calls you in a different direction, till you have leisure to examine these subjects more minutely, accept a piece of *practical* advice, a compliance with which will be satisfactory to you in the interval:—believe in Christ as the Saviour of the world, and diligently endeavour to keep his commandments, and then you will be substantially right, whichever system be true; for faith *and* works are all that is required by *either*, and *more* we think than is absolutely required by *one*.

In justice to those, whom we have called our opponents, we cannot conclude without bearing this testimony in their favour,—that we give them unbounded credit for the sincerity of their professions, and the purity of their intentions, and that we always, at least, admire their zeal, if we cannot always approve the mode and scene of its operations. In the course of our enquiry we have held out certain preliminary proposals, which, if accepted by them in the spirit of peace, and fol-

\* The text prefixed to Mr. Simeon's Sermons was I. Cor. 10. xv.

† To the Undergraduates.

‡ Acts 17. xi.

lowed up by a liberal, equitable, and conciliating conduct on their part towards the rest of their ministerial brethren, might ultimately lead, we are firmly persuaded, to a complete and permanent adjustment of our differences; and we might hope to see the happy day at length arrive, when both they and we might "all speak the same thing," and "with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

If however we cannot *convince* one another, let us not cease to *love* one another; and, if the blessings of unity and peace be denied to our Church, while yet it is militant here on earth, let us hope and pray that no difference of opinion among its members and ministers may prevent them from alike attaining to that future and eternal "rest, which remaineth" in heaven "for the people of God."

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# **APPENDIX**

**TO A**

## **COURSE OF SERMONS,**

**PREACHED BEFORE**

**The University of Cambridge,**

*During the month of April, 1816.*

**H**



## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1

1.1.1. The first part of the chapter is devoted to the study of the

1.1.2. The second part of the chapter is devoted to the study of the

1.1.3. The third part of the chapter is devoted to the study of the

1.1.4. The fourth part of the chapter is devoted to the study of the

1.1.5. The fifth part of the chapter is devoted to the study of the

**I**T is satisfactory to the author of the preceding Sermons to find that the representation, which he had given in them, of Mr. Simeon's late Discourses before the University, is abundantly confirmed by their own testimony, a fact which he has been enabled to ascertain by the recent appearance in print of those Discourses of Mr. Simeon, under the title of "An Appeal to Men of Wisdom and Candour." He is anxious, however, to put his readers likewise in possession of the necessary materials for forming an opinion of their own on the matter, and, for that purpose, he here intends to extract from Mr. Simeon's Sermons, both those passages to which he referred in his own, and also any others, which he may have previously omitted to consider, and which appear to bear upon the questions he has discussed. He has preferred throwing these quotations, and the observations he has to offer on them, into the form of an Appendix, instead of attaching them to the several sentences to which they respectively apply, that he might avoid the necessity of diverting the reader's attention and interrupting the course of the argument, and that he might consult the convenience of the possessors of his first edition. The references, at the beginning of each note, will be made to the pages and lines of the author's own Sermons, which are the same in both editions; and the numbers, subjoined to the quotations from Mr. Simeon's Discourses, will point out the page and line from which they are taken.

*Trinity College, Cambridge.*

*Nov. 30th, 1816.*

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 2. *Background*  
 3. *Methodology*  
 4. *Results*  
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## APPENDIX &c.

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NOTE 1.—to p. 2, l. 25.—“Ministers of the Gospel.”—  
 “It will be generally granted that the Gospel, which the apostle Paul preached, was the true Gospel, and we find that the foregoing marks were inseparable from his doctrines: his statements were disapproved by those, who were carried away either by philosophy and vain deceit on the one hand, or by superstition on the other hand: to the Jews his doctrine was a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. . . . . If, therefore, the Gospel, which we preach, be disapproved by the *same persons* as disapproved of his we have so far an evidence in its favour.” (p. 6, l. 1.)—To give any force to this argument, it is absolutely necessary to suppose that they, who disapprove of the statements of Mr. Simeon and his friends, are carried away either by philosophy and vain deceit on the one hand, (“proud and self-sufficient sciolists,” as he elsewhere calls them, p. 4.) or by superstition on the other hand; an assumption neither very charitable, nor perhaps perfectly self-evident, and which amounts in truth to a *petitio principii*. But what if some persons should oppose his doctrines merely from an opinion that they are *not* the same with those of St. Paul? Opposition, from *such* a motive, would argue just as much *against* him, as, on his present gratuitous assumption, it does *for* him.

NOTE 2.—to p. 4, note.—“We are all by nature blind to the things of God.” (p. 13, l. 6.)—“Where a nature is so depraved, as ours from the foregoing statement appears to be, there can be no disposition to any thing truly and spiritually good: on the contrary there must be an aversion to what is

good, and, in consequence of that, an incapacity to engage successfully in the prosecution or performance of any good thing." (p. 22, l. 19.)—"Because of his (man's) inveterate inclination to evil and aversion to what is good, he cannot bring the powers of his mind to bear on the prosecution of any thing that is truly and spiritually good." (p. 23, l. 2.)—"We say of man that he is altogether destitute of every thing that is truly and spiritually good, and altogether prone to evil, though, in respect of the visible fruits of evil, there is a considerable difference between one and another." (p. 24, l. 8.)—"It has been already shewn that we are altogether born in sin, and corrupt in all our faculties." (p. 34, l. 10.)

NOTE 3.—to p. 7, l. 29.—"aversion and disgust."—As Mr. Simeon does in p. 12, l. 15.

NOTE 4.—to p. 8; note 1.—"When, therefore, we say that man is by nature altogether helpless; and incapable of doing any thing that is good; we wish it to be borne in mind what the incapacity is, of which we speak. Were it an incapacity that rendered all exertion nugatory, man's responsibility for his actions would, as far as relates to that point, be at an end, but our incapacity arising altogether from the inveteracy of our love to sin, and the total alienation of our hearts from what is truly good; it ceases to be an extenuation of our guilt; and becomes rather an aggravation of it." (p. 23, l. 19.)—In this extraordinary paragraph Mr. Simeon endeavours to remove a difficulty, which presents itself to him apparently no less than to others, as a most formidable objection to the accuracy of his system, and that is, the aspect it bears on the free-agency of man. He says in another place: "It were to be wished that our opponents would content themselves with statements that may be found, but they far exceed the wildest reveries that have ever issued from any ignorant enthusiast, and represent those, who maintain the total depravity of our nature, as reducing men to the condition of stocks and stones." (p. 18, l. 22.)—"True, we do so represent them; and, in proof of the correctness of that representation, we will content ourselves, not

merely with statements that *may* be found, but that *may* be found too in those very sermons, wherein Mr. Simeon expresses this wish, and in the very passage, where he undertakes to refute what he considers the calumnies of his opponents, and to establish his own idea of the doctrine of original sin. Mr. Simeon allows; (see note 2,) that man labours under "an incapacity to engage successfully in the prosecution or performance of any good thing," and that "he cannot bring the powers of his mind to bear on the prosecution of any thing that is truly and spiritually good:" and what else is wanting to reduce him to a mere machine, as far as all moral and religious purposes are concerned? But, as if what he had already done were insufficient to demolish his own theory, Mr. Simeon proceeds to employ a more expanded train of reasoning, the whole force of which is directed decidedly against himself. He goes on thus: "if he (man) *had* the inclination and the desire, his exertions would be proportioned to the extent of those desires; "but, (as he adds shortly afterwards,) "it is the *want* of these pious inclinations that *keeps* us from looking unto God for his effectual aid, and consequently from attaining that strength, whereby *alone*, we can subdue and mortify our natural corruptions." (p. 28, l. 6 and 14.) Let us sum up this reasoning, and observe the result:—man is utterly in want of pious inclinations; that want keeps him from looking unto God; and consequently from attaining that strength whereby alone he can do any thing that is good, or restrain himself from doing any thing that is evil. Hence man is utterly incapable either of the one or the other, that is, he is compelled to pursue one necessary course of action; and consequently the charge brought against Mr. Simeon's doctrine, that it "reduces men to the condition of stocks and stones," is most thoroughly evinced by his own argument.

We have seen then the manner, in which Mr. Simeon *uses* the arguments he advances for the purpose of warding off this serious accusation: let us now very briefly examine on what those arguments are *grounded*. The source of them all is a

certain *distinction*, which Mr. Simeon lays down as most essential to be observed in the question. He has stated that distinction under some diversity of language, and we mean to discuss the substance of it under each of the forms in which it appears.—Mr. Simeon in one place denies that man's responsibility is on his system destroyed, because "our incapacity arises altogether from the inveteracy of our love to sin, and the total alienation of our hearts from what is truly good." (p. 23. l. 25.) No matter what it *arises from*, if it only be from causes independent of ourselves, and this Mr. Simeon most amply acknowledges in attributing it to the original corruption of our nature. It is the necessary existence of this disability without our causation or concurrence, and not the mere proximate origin of it, or the particular mode of its operation, which alone *creates* the difficulty, and which alone therefore is to be taken into account in *solving* it.—Mr. Simeon's distinction is also more abstractedly stated in the following very surprising terms:—man's "incapacity to do any thing that is good, is a *moral* and not a *physical* incapacity. A man is not under the same *kind* of incapacity to stop the progress of his corruptions that he is to stop the sun in its course." (p. 22. l. 26.) Who can explain even the *terms* of this most unaccountable position, and tell what is meant by a physical incapacity, as distinct from a moral one, of regulating the affections of one's own mind? The word "physical" when opposed to "moral," as it is here, relates to the properties of matter as contradistinguished from those of mind; and it is in this sense, (its only proper one,) that Mr. Simeon uses it, if we at all comprehend his illustration taken from the sun. The sum total then of the information which he here gives us, and which forms the nucleus of all his arguments in refutation of the charges brought against his doctrine, is this—that the incapacity, of which he is speaking, to controul the mind, arises from some thing wrong or defective in the mind *itself*, and not in the *body*; whence it would seem that he is acquainted with some theological school, which holds that the moral and intellectual powers of men are in proportion

to the size and strength of their *bodies*.<sup>\*</sup> But to have done with this trifling;—who ever doubted that the incapacity in question is a moral one; what other have both he and his opponents had in view all along; and what other is applicable to questions concerning moral liberty and necessity, vice and virtue? We agree with him most fully that it is a moral incapacity, and there lies the mischief; and there too lies the whole strength of the objection of his opponents.—If however Mr. Simeon intends in this passage to give to the word “physical” a sense, which indeed it can never bear, but which is the only one that will serve his purpose, by making it equivalent to “final” or “total,” and if he consequently means to assert that the incapacity, for which he is contending, is not *insuperable* on the part of man, we have only to remark that the contrary has been already proved on his own authority in the former part of the present note.

As examples of the strange inconsistencies into which people must fall, when they undertake to defend unreasonable opinions, the reader may compare together respectively, the following extracts from Mr. Simeon’s “Appeal,” relating to the point now under consideration, as they stand, side by side, frowning unutterable defiance and irreconcilable hostility at each other.

“We concede that persons may be morally good, not altogether destitute of every merely in comparison of others, thing that is truly and spiri- but to a certain degree really tually good, and altogether and substantially so.” (p. 19, prone to evil.” (p. 24, l. 3.) l. 19.)

Therefore a person may be “really” good, and yet not “truly” so.

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\* Perhaps the hypothesis, here obliquely hinted at in Mr. Simeon’s distinction, may tend to explain a sentence in the Speech delivered in the Senate House last Commencement, (July 1816,) by the late Deputy Regius Professor of Divinity, which in the opinion, both of those who heard it, and of those who have subsequently heard of it, loudly called for explanation, though the learned Doctor himself has not thought proper to give any.



Again :

Mr. Simeon allows, that man labours under "an incapacity to engage successfully in the prosecution or performance of any good thing," (p. 22. l. 23.) and that "he cannot bring the powers of his mind to bear on the prosecution of any thing that is truly and spiritually good." (p. 23. l. 4.)

He admits, that this moral incapacity is not one "that renders all exertion nugatory." (p. 23. l. 23.)

Therefore, though a man is utterly incapable of exerting himself for a particular purpose, and though his labour would be necessarily unsuccessful even if he *could* employ it, yet he *may* exert himself for the self-same purpose, and his exertion will not be nugatory.

Once more :

"Even the discourses of our blessed Lord and Saviour, notwithstanding his confirmation of them by miracles unnumbered, could not convince those who did not *choose* to be convinced." (p. 13. l. 13.)

Therefore they *might*, if they had pleased, have opened their eyes and been convinced. But, in the sentence immediately preceding that on the opposite side of the page, we read that "we are all, *by nature, blind* to the things of God."

Therefore incapacity of a particular kind may be both voluntary and involuntary at the same time.

Mr. Simeon concludes his own account of original sin with asking—"Is there any thing *extravagant* in this statement?" (p. 24, l. 24.) Let the "men of wisdom" judge, to whom he has made his "Appeal," from the specimens already produced.

NOTE 5.—to p. 12, l. 10.—"affections and desires."—Mr. Simeon has an excellent sentence towards the conclusion of his second Sermon, (p. 30.) but one which is destitute of any force or propriety on his *own* principles. He asks "What ought we

to feel, who have lived as without God in the world, who have exalted to his throne all the vanities of time and sense, and have in fact been a god unto ourselves, doing our own will, finding our own pleasure, and seeking out own glory? What I say ought such persons to feel?" To which we reply—*nothing*, if they hold his opinions, for they may then fairly turn round upon him and say, "however bad we may be, we are not to blame, for we came into the world in the last state of depravity, and have been ever since bound hand and foot, and perfectly incapable of helping ourselves."

NOTE 6.—to p. 29, l. 3.—"of the mind."—There is only one quotation from Scripture, of those advanced by Mr. Simeon in defence of his opinions on original sin, which has not been already examined in the text of the preceding sermons, and that is Rom. 8: 7; "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." No doubt "the carnal mind," or, (to render the words more accurately,) "the minding of the flesh," the "making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," as the Apostle elsewhere expresses himself in the same epistle, (Rom. 13. 14.) the employing our whole attention in devising ways and means for the gratification of the sensual appetite, to the neglect and perversion of the intellectual and moral part of our nature—this is a conduct opposed to the will of God, and the precepts of self-regulation which he has given us; nor can such a principle of action, while it continues to operate, be possibly "*subject*" to a law, to which in its very nature and exercise it is *adverse*. But what has all this to do in proving the totality of human corruption? the text does not even imply the existence of natural corruption at all; it only states the necessary effects of sensuality, *wherever* found, and *however* occasioned.

Having done with Scripture, Mr. Simeon has recourse to the argumentum ad hominem. In p. 28, he asks his hearers a long list of questions, the substance of which is this,—“do you find that you are absolutely perfect.” He reasonably enough anticipates that they will answer in the negative; and thence he concludes, that men by nature are as corrupt as he

has described them. But is there then no *medium* between a state of absolute perfection, and one of total corruption; and, if there be, what will be the value of Mr. Simeon's argument? not to mention that, even if he had succeeded in proving his auditors as depraved as he could wish, it would still remain to be enquired how they *became* so; whether merely from their innate corruption, or partly also from their own voluntary indulgence in sin.

NOTE 7.—to p. 37, note—Mr. Simeon p. 43, l. 14.—Notwithstanding these concessions however, Mr. Simeon appears to have a manifest partiality for sudden conversions, and especially when attended with symptoms of violence; so much so indeed that it induces him to *superadd* these attributes, *without any authority*, to conversions mentioned in Scripture. Thus he tells us that, on the day of Pentecost, “three thousand persons at once were crying out with great agony of mind.” (p. 66, *last line*.) The Evangelist however relates nothing of this tremendous and simultaneous outcry, which is purely a creature of Mr. Simeon's imagination. From the narrative of the sacred writer indeed we cannot even infer that three thousand persons were assembled together on this occasion, though it is not improbable, but he only states that in the course of the *same day*” (Acts 2. 41.) that number was converted; and of those, who *were* converted by Peter's sermon, he merely informs us that they “*said* unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles,” (and with perfect calmness for any thing that appears to the contrary,) “Men and brethren what shall we do?” (v. 37.) They had been convinced of the truth of Christianity by arguments, which perfectly satisfied their reason, and at the same time strongly awakened their consciences, and they naturally enquire, like sober-minded men, what they must do to make their peace with God at present, and to please him in future. This is something very different from the conversions described in the Journals of Whitfield and Wesley, to which however Mr. Simeon's representation would make it seem very similar.

NOTE 8.—to p. 41, note.—So likewise Mr. Simeon: “This change far exceeds the power of fallen man.” (p. 39, l. 11.)

Now this is true, as far as it goes, of spiritual renovation *in general*, but then it is not the *whole* truth: man cannot make himself what God would have him to be without the aid of divine grace, but it does not therefore follow that he can do *nothing* for himself; he may pray and labour, either to reform or improve his heart, and such exertions will be rewarded with a necessary supply of God's assistance. (Luke 11. 13.) Now the total omission of this latter consideration we hold to be highly pernicious, and likely to lead to the consequences enumerated in the text.

NOTE 9.—to p. 46, l. 26.—“professing Christians.”—This consideration at once disposes of all the arguments grounded on our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, a Jew, referring, as it plainly does throughout, to the case of persons, who had not as yet embraced Christianity.

NOTE 10.—to p. 47, l. 26.—“external instrument.”—The opponents of baptismal regeneration have one very short method of proving that Baptism cannot be the same thing with Regeneration, but it is unhappily chargeable with two grievous logical errors—the one is, that of reasoning in a circle, and the other, that of taking for granted the very point in dispute. They set out with assuming that Baptism is not necessarily attended with any spiritual benefits: they thus reduce it to a mere rite, and then they prove, (incontrovertibly no doubt,) that this same bare external rite of washing or sprinkling, cannot possible come up to the scriptural idea of Baptism. This is the fallacy which runs through the whole of Mr. Simeon's remarks on our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, as where he says:—“Admitting that he, (our Lord,) insisted on the necessity of being born of water, he insisted also on being born of the Spirit, in order that he might convince Nicodemus that he spoke, not of an outward and carnal, but of an inward and spiritual change.” (p. 41, l. 4.) And again; “On the supposition that he speaks of a spiritual birth, his reasons are clear and forcible; that, which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and therefore unfit for a spiritual kingdom; but that, which is born of the Spirit, is spirit, and exactly suited to that kingdom which he was about to establish.” (l. 10.) Thus then he makes a

separation, without any authority, between the external rite and its internal efficacy, and then shews that, what is predicated of them taken *together*, cannot be predicated of one of them taken *by itself*, and hence he infers, that this one does not include *both*; so that it is at length *proved*, that, what in the first instance was *assumed* as a *part*, and treated accordingly, is, and can be, *only* a part. He must be a desperate sceptic indeed who will deny the *conclusion* of this reasoning at least, but at the same time the reader will be pleased to observe, that the only question which called forth all this logic, namely, whether Baptism and Regeneration are in their nature *separable*, remains precisely *in statu quo*.—Mr. Simeon however, says, in reference to that contested text, (John 3, 5.) “It were much to be wished that those, who will have Baptism to be the new birth, would take this passage and try what sense they can make of it according to their own interpretation.” (p. 42, l. 14.) We are very ready to make the experiment and to abide by the result, understanding by the word Baptism; not as Mr. Simeon does, merely “an outward work of man upon the body,” but such a work duly performed, in obedience to the express institution of the divine Founder of our religion, and depending for its inherent efficacy, solely on the authority of his institution. According to this sense of the term, the text in question may be thus paraphrased: “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit,”—unless he be initiated into that spiritual religion which I am come to establish, by the rite which I have appointed for the purpose, which will give him a covenant and an assured title to the blessings of the Christian dispensation, to the necessary spiritual assistance for performing the conditions of that covenant in spirit and in truth, and to an heavenly inheritance, as the reward of such obedience; “he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”—he can neither be a subject of my kingdom here; nor can he have any *claim* to eternal happiness hereafter.” This sense of the passage is surely an intelligible one, nor is it chargeable with the consequences frequently imputed to it, (see note 15,) of making Baptism the only thing necessary to salvation, for our Lord

is here merely alluding to the privileges conferred in the first instance by Baptism, and the results to which they will finally lead, if they are diligently preserved and competently improved; he does not take into account the case of their being afterwards *lost*; he merely states the provision, which God has made on *his* part for human salvation, supposing men not to be deficient on *theirs*. We have enlarged on this text for the purpose of complying with the requisition made by Mr. Simson, and of shewing, (what he considers to be impossible,) that it is capable of a very natural and rational interpretation on the principles of those persons, who differ from him in his views of baptismal regeneration, although we have already seen, (note 9,) that this text is perfectly incapable of deciding the main question, the necessity of a new birth to baptized and professing Christians. An observation of Dr. Hey, which we have met with since writing the preceding Sermons, will illustrate and confirm the sentiments advanced in them and in this note. After shewing that, in the language of our Church, Baptism and Regeneration are convertible terms, he adds, "Some may apprehend danger from this remark, as if it let down Regeneration to mean only the external form of Baptism, but I do not see how it does that. 'When shall we complete our contract; when shall we sign and seal?' These being used for one another do not let down *contrasting* to the mere outward ceremony of *sealing*. The outward part in a symbolical act must always imply the thing signified, that is, in Baptism, putting on the new man, (Ephes. 4, 22, 23, 24,) or acquiring the true Christian disposition. When we speak of entering on any state of life, as by manumission, indentures, marriage, &c. we take for granted the *ordinary* effects; they pass unmentioned, because it seems needless to mention them."—*Hey's Theological Lectures*.—Book 4. Art. 9. Sect. 24.

NOTE 11. —to p. 48, note 2. —'Tis abundantly evident that the common phrase of the Jews was to call the Baptism of a proselyte his Regeneration or new birth. And the Christians did in all ancient times continue the use of this name for

Baptism, so as that they never use the word "regenerate," or "born again," but that they mean or denote by it, Baptism." *Wall on Infant Baptism. Introduct. p. 58.*

NOTE 12.—to p. 48, l. 11.—"own Church".—Dr. Hey remarks, in the section just now quoted, that "in our 9th Article, the Latin word for "regenerated" is "renatis," and "renatis" in this same Article is the Latin for "baptized," whence it appears that our Article means the same thing by "regenerated" and "baptized."—To which might be added the incontrovertible evidence to the same effect which may be found in the baptismal service itself, as well as in that for Confirmation.

NOTE 13.—to p. 49, note 1.—Mr. Simeon expresses himself thus: "In *many* instances, where the ordinance is really attended upon in faith, and prayer is offered up to God in faith, we do believe that God bestows a peculiar blessing on the child." (p. 46, l. 25.) Now, if the spiritual effects of infant Baptism are thus detached from the due performance of the ordinance itself, and made to be solely dependent on the conduct and sentiments of those who are concerned in it, (and that too only in a secondary way,) it would surely be a great satisfaction to the parents and friends of children baptized in their infancy if Mr. Simeon could lay down some clear and infallible rule for determining in what cases this Sacrament has had its full effect, and in what it has failed. There is, however, one argument adduced by Mr. Simeon, to disprove the spiritual effects of Baptism, which, as it is equally applicable to infant as to adult Baptism, may be properly considered in this place. He takes certain texts of Scripture, which describe the character of those who are truly born of God, and then shews, that this character does not necessarily belong to all who have received Baptism. Thus St. John says: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." (1, John, 3. 9.) And again: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."

(1. John v. 18.) "Now we ask," Mr. Simeon says, "is this true of all that are baptized? Do they invariably, from the moment of their Baptism overcome the world? &c." He then puts these questions home to his auditors thus: "You have all been baptized, but have you all overcome the world? Are you all in such a state that you cannot knowingly and habitually commit sin? And have you so kept yourselves that the wicked one does not touch you?" (p. 44, l. 18.) And now we would take Mr. Simeon on his own ground, and ask him in return whether he *himself*, or any one else who professes to have experienced the *new birth* according to the modern notions of it, can truly say that these questions can be answered affirmatively and in their literal sense by *themselves* any more than others. We imagine they will hardly venture to lay claim to such a character of sinless perfection, and consequently, if these texts prove that *Baptism* cannot be Regeneration, they *also* prove that the modern *new birth* cannot be Regeneration.\* Besides, Mr. Simeon's argument, if *fully established*, would only prove that baptized Christians may in future life be involved in sin. And what then? They might *still* have been regenerated in Baptism, and afterwards lost by their own neglect the grace they then acquired.—That Baptism however, thus stripped of its essentials, may retain at least "a shadow of good things," Mr. Simeon admits that it is a "*sign*" of Regeneration; (p. 49, l. 24.) but we are not much indebted to him for this concession, for a sign, totally unconnected with the thing signified, is a *sign* of nothing, that is, no sign at all. It is somewhat curious that with these opinions Mr. Simeon should still profess the most profound respect for Baptism, and

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\* The truth is that, unless the Apostle be made to contradict himself, (see 1 John 1. 8.) the texts above cited, if taken in their *strongest* sense, must be understood as descriptive merely of the state and condition, which it is the constant *object* and *aim* of sincere Christians to attain, though every one must in some degree or other fall short of it.



the most perfect conviction that it is attended with "exceeding great benefit to the soul" (p. 46, l. 20); and still more curious that, only a few pages farther, he should have given an account of the spiritual effects of Baptism, which was evidently intended to be extremely *ludicrous*. He says that the advocates for the new birth of Baptism "make it irresistible; for the child cannot withstand the power of the priest. Next they make it without any co-operation on our part; for the child is wholly passive. Next they make it arbitrary according to the will of man, who may hasten it, or delay it, or prevent it, exactly as he pleases; whereas it is expressly said of all Christians that they are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."\* Next they make it so determinable in point of time, that not the person himself only, but the whole world also, may know it by consulting the parish register.† And, lastly, they are assured of it not only without any evidence at all, but in the very face of all imaginable evidence to the contrary." (p. 50, l. 24.) But it is more curious than all that, after thus degrading Baptism in one place, Mr. Simeon should, in another, give a description of it, which invests it with all the spiritual privileges for which his opponents contend, and which entirely oversets his favourite doctrine concerning the new birth. He says: "Every blessing which he, (St. Paul,) asserts to have been conveyed by circumcision, we may safely and truly apply to Baptism. By the very admission of persons into covenant with God they are brought into a new state, and have a right and title to all these privileges, and, by the exercise of faith in the Lord

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\* The slender tissue of argument, which runs through this series of sarcasms, may be easily broken, for the *spiritual* effects of Baptism, which we mean by the term Regeneration, are in no respect dependent on the will of man, but *altogether* on that of God, since it is merely by his good will and pleasure that they are annexed to Baptism.

† This is the passage alluded to in the preceding sermons, p. 92, note 1.

Jesus Christ, they come to the actual possession of them." (p. 47, l. 25.) And shortly afterwards he adds: "a baptized person has a right and title to all the blessings of the Christian covenant as soon as he is baptized; but he must comply with the requisitions of the Gospel, and exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, before he can have the complete enjoyment of them." (p. 48, l. 18.) By a compliance, therefore, with the requisitions of the Gospel, which are briefly these, that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," (Tit. 2, 12.) baptized Christians may attain salvation; and what then becomes of the new birth subsequent to Baptism, with all its material and usual train of extravagancies, and tortures, and ecstasies?

NOTE 14.—to p. 50, note 1.—Mr. Simeon's words are: "It is said by Paul that "God did not send him to baptize, but to preach the Gospel:" but was not he sent to beget souls to God through the Gospel? He goes further, and says, "I thank God I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius." (p. 45, l. 18.) Mr. Simeon here stops short in his quotation, though in the midst of a sentence, and though the latter half of it, which he has suppressed, most fully explains the reason and meaning of the Apostle's remark. Mr. Simeon then asks: "But would he have accounted it a proper ground of thanksgiving if he had been instrumental to the conversion of no more than these?" We answer that he certainly *would*, under the same circumstances. The case was not, (as Mr. Simeon would represent it,) that St. Paul considered the *Baptism* of the Corinthians as a matter of indifference, which might be either performed or omitted with equal advantage; but *this* was in his opinion the matter of indifference—whether Baptism should be conferred on them by *himself* or any *other* lawful minister, and, as his own ministry would in this instance have afforded a ground for dissent, the Apostle rejoices that it had not been exercised: and there can be no doubt that the spirit of charity, which dictated the sentiments he here expresses, would have led him to adopt the same if the question

had been—not indeed whether they should be *converted at all*, but whether by Paul's own ministry rather than that of any other man.—Mr. Simeon proceeds: “He tells us of many, whom he had begotten by the Gospel, and who were his sons in the faith, and therefore we are sure that there is a birth effected by the word and Spirit of God that is totally distinct from Baptism.” The Apostle had begotten many by the Gospel, or had converted many to the Christian faith. And who *were* they? Universally, Jews or Heathens; and how does it follow that because *they* required conversion, therefore so do all baptized Christians? In short, Mr. Simeon's argument is no other than this—in the case of Jews and Heathens, conversion was universally necessary *previously* to Baptism; therefore in the case of Christians, conversion is universally necessary *subsequently* to Baptism; an argument, between the premises and conclusion of which there is a vast hiatus, a dreary void. Neither can we see what service Mr. Simeon has done to his cause, by taking the trouble to prove, what every one would have allowed, that the conversion of a heathen was a distinct thing from his Baptism; nor how this fact tends to invalidate the spiritual efficacy of the latter. Its operation in truth is of a directly *contrary* kind, for if, after persons had experienced the most perfect conversion imaginable, under the ministry, and by the immediate agency, of the Apostles themselves, and even of our Saviour, they still stood in need of Baptism before they could become partakers of the blessings of the Gospel, we must naturally infer that this sacred ordinance is one of the highest importance, and attended with the most beneficial consequences.—Mr. Simeon's comments on our Saviour's mission are similar to those which he has given on St. Paul's: “It is said, “Our Lord baptized no man.” But was he not the means of any being born to God?” (p. 45; 2. 16.) And was he not *equally* the means of their being *baptized*, when their conversion immediately led them to Baptism as a necessary consequence; and would he not therefore have been *equally* the means of their being born to God whether that event took place at their conversion or their Baptism?

This remark is just as applicable to the text last quoted as to the present one, and therefore from *neither* of them can any thing be deduced favourable to Mr. Simeon's purpose. But how was it he did not give us the *whole* of the passage he here refers to, which expressly tells us that, though *Jesus* baptized not, yet his *disciples* did under his direction: and does not Mr. Simeon know that, "*qui facit per alium, facit per se*"? It farther informs us, when stated *without mutilation*, that our Lord was thus the means of baptizing such *multitudes* of converts that his success in that way induced him, from prudential considerations, to *change* for a time the scene of his ministry: "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,"—(and how many *John* baptized see in Matt. iii. 5, 6.)—("though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee." John iv. 1, 2, 3.

NOTE 15.—to p. 51, note 1.—Mr. Simeon is guilty of the same unfairness in his "Appeal." In one place speaking of "some distinguished characters," as he calls them, he says, "they assert that all persons do necessarily by a divine appointment receive the Holy Ghost (in Baptism) in such a manner and degree, as really to be changed in the spirit of their minds into the very image of God in righteousness and true holiness, and so to partake of the divine nature that they never need afterwards to seek so great a change again." (p. 43, l. 21.) Now though, in this particular passage, he may seem to confine the opinion, of the sufficiency of Baptism to salvation, to certain individuals,\* yet, in another, he indirectly charges it upon all who identify Regeneration with Baptism.† Of this we complain as an act of extreme injustice, for we defy Mr. Simeon, or any one else, to prove that the

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\* "Whether or not these opinions are justly chargeable even on the writers, to whom Mr. Simeon may here be supposed to allude, is a question which we decline entering into, because it is altogether irrelevant to the purpose in hand.

† See the last quotation from Mr. Simeon in note 33.

former of those tenets is in the most remote degree connected with the latter, or any how deducible from it. We have already in the preceding sermons (p. 50. 51. 54. 55. 90) expressed our own sentiments pretty fully on the nature of the spiritual effects of Baptism, (which we call Regeneration;) and those sentiments we believe to be the same that are generally held by those of our clergy, who, according to the phraseology introduced by their opponents, must be called, by way of distinction, *unevangelical*. To prevent, however, any misconception of those opinions in future, (unless it be wilful,) we will here endeavour to explain them somewhat more minutely and connectedly. Baptism may be divided, according to the age of the subjects of it, into infant Baptism and adult Baptism: infants universally must be under the same circumstances as to their qualifications for this holy ordinance: adults may differ from each other in those respects, according as they possess the necessary qualifications required in them for the worthy reception of this Sacrament, namely, repentance and faith, or as they possess them not. Thus we shall have three distinct classes of persons, who may each become the subjects of Baptism, and in *all* of them we believe that Baptism produces a change of *state*, or that it brings those who receive it, under due administration, into covenant with God, and admits them to the privileges of the Gospel covenant; that is, that it gives them such an interest in the merits of Christ as entitles them to salvation on observing the terms of the Christian covenant, and, if they shall at any time have forfeited those blessings by sin, to an assured acceptance of their sincere repentance and renewed obedience, and of their consequent restoration to the favour of God. Again, (to follow Mr. Simeon's own distinction,) with regard to the change of *nature* effected in Baptism, we believe, first, that infants receive at that time a covenanted right to that degree of spiritual assistance, which is necessary for them in the outset of their Christian course; which will be infallibly conferred upon them as soon as they are able to use it, that is, as soon as the powers of the understanding develope themselves; and which will be increased, as

occasion requires, if it be not systematically neglected, and voluntarily opposed. Secondly, we believe that adults, who *worthily* receive that holy Sacrament are also in the reception of it endued with such a portion of grace, as will enable them to perform the engagements which they then undertake. Thirdly, with respect even to *unworthy* partakers of the laver of Regeneration, we believe that though, if they continue in that state to the end of life, their Christian circumcision will become uncircumcision to them, yet that, whenever they turn to the Lord in sincerity of heart, they become entitled to the benefits, which the Christian covenant, and that alone, authoritatively offers to unfeigned repentance, and to a capacity of salvation on the same terms as other Christians. But, lastly, we believe that in *all* cases, and under the most *favourable* circumstances, so far are men from being changed by Baptism into "the very image of God," that we hold they never can attain it by any means in this life; and so far are we from thinking that they never need afterwards to seek any farther change in the way of *improvement*, that we contend those persons utterly falsify their baptismal profession who do not endeavour "*continually* to mortify all their evil and corrupt affections, and daily to proceed in all virtue and godliness of living," thereby studiously aiming at a still nearer degree of conformity with the divine image, as portrayed in "the example of our Saviour Christ." So widely different then are our real opinions from those which are frequently attributed to us.

NOTE 16.—to p. 54, line 36.—"Regeneration."—A few other passages, than those already noticed in the text, are produced by Mr. Simeon, (p. 40, and 54,) in favour of his opinions on the subject of the new birth. They are as follow: "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God." (Rom. ii. 28, 29.) And again: "all are not Israel who are of Israel." (Rom. ix. 6.) The sense of these two

passages is extremely evident ; they were intended to correct the erroneous notions of the Jews, who supposed themselves necessarily and exclusively entitled to all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, because they were God's peculiar people, and the children of Abraham, to whom the promise was made ; and to convince them that God must be *spiritually* worshipped and obeyed by all who would serve him acceptably. This is a truth, which no one will doubt who has ever read the New Testament, but one which can afford no foundation for the modern tenets concerning the new birth, unless the main fact in dispute be once more taken for granted—that Christians, who have *not* experienced this birth, are Christians by external profession *merely*.—The remaining texts are these ; “ In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, or, a new creation.” (Gal. vi. 15.) And ; “ If any man be in Christ he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.” (2 Cor. v. 17.) The epistle to the Galatians was written *expressly*, and those to the Corinthians *principally*, for the purpose of defending the authority and doctrine of St. Paul against the Judaizers, who contended that the Mosaic law was still binding upon Christians, and that Christianity, without it, would be ineffectual to salvation. In the first of the texts now cited the Apostle is opposing those errors directly, and in the second somewhat more remotely ;\* and for that purpose he asserts that the local and temporary dispensation of the Law, together with all its peculiar immunities, rights, and privileges, had been abrogated by the Gospel, which might therefore be properly called a new creation, for it introduced both Jews and Heathens, who embraced it, into a perfectly new state ; it gave them new doctrines, new principles of action, new motives to obedience, new hopes and prospects, new promises and blessings. But the Gospel cannot be a new thing in *all* these respects, nor therefore in the same *extent*, to those who have

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\* See the verse immediately preceding.

been brought up from their infancy in the profession of it, as it was to those, who never heard of it, and to whom it was never offered, till they had arrived at maturity or old age. Whether indeed they, who in modern times have been educated in the religion of the Gospel, and have made an external profession of it, have complied with its obligations, is another and a distinct question. If not, a change, (perhaps a considerable one,) is certainly required of them, and the state, into which they are brought by undergoing it, may be called, (though not without inconvenience,) by any one who thinks fit to call it so, a new creation; only it must be remembered that the words will then be used in a more confined sense, and therefore, so far in a different one from that, in which they must be necessarily taken in the passages now before us.

NOTE 17.—to p. 55, l. 9.—“of Christ.”—Mr. Simeon asks: “shall we perish because we were fearful that we had not yet attained that new birth, and continued with all diligence to seek it after we had actually obtained it?” (p. 53, l. 6.) Certainly no one will hazard his salvation by the mere endeavour to make himself better than he is, but he very probably may by taking up enthusiastic notions and practices, such as the modern theories of the new birth are very likely to engender in weak minds; for, however that doctrine may be understood and acted upon by its more rational advocates, it will always have the effect of giving a wrong bias to the spirit of religion among ignorant people, by inducing them to estimate their religious proficiency rather by their feelings than their conduct, which latter is the only proof of advancement in holiness recognized by the Scriptures.

NOTE 18.—to p. 55, *last line*.—“hand of God.”—Mr. Simeon says: “in order to be made meet for heaven, man must be made spiritually good, that is, he must love what God loves, and hate what God hates, and be and do what God commands.” (p. 38, l. 5.) and he adds: “whenever this great work is truly effected, then we say that the man is born again, and born of the spirit; and the change that has taken place within him we call The New Birth.” (p. 39, l. 26.) Hence it appears that the doctrine



of the new birth, whether its meaning be collected from the scriptural passages which the defenders of it are accustomed to alledge in its support,\* or from their own explanations of it, turns out at last to signify nothing more than the necessity which exists for Christians to walk worthy of their high calling in righteousness and true holiness; so that when the strenuous advocates for this doctrine find fault with their unevangelical brethren for not insisting on it sufficiently, they in fact blame them for dwelling too *little* on the necessity of good works, whereas, on other occasions, they reproach us with speaking of them too *much*;† the inconsistency of which charges is of itself a tolerable proof that both of them are equally unmerited. We see, however, on the strength of what has been just made out, that if our opponents *desire* to come to an agreement with us on the particular topic we have been now discussing, the first and most important step for the purpose must be taken by themselves, after which other subsidiary arrangements might probably be effected without much difficulty; let them only discard the novel application of the terms, which they have adopted in reference to this subject, and by the use of which they have contrived to throw a deep veil of mystery over their meaning, and the consequence will be that both they and we shall be found testifying alike to the indispensable necessity of that holiness of heart and life, “without which no man shall see the Lord.”

NOTE 19.—to p. 58, l. 1.—“directed.”—The remarks in this sentence are strictly applicable to Mr. Simeon’s sermon on this subject.

NOTE 20.—to p. 58, l. 6.—“performing it.”—“Go then and search the records of your life, and see what works you will bring forth in order to *eke out the insufficient merits of your Saviour*; bring forth one single work; one only out of your whole life; one that has no defect, and one that does not in any

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\* See the passages considered in the text and in Notes 13 and 16.

† Mr. Simeon calls us, in another part of his Appeal, “*declaimers about good works.*” (p. 77, l. 1.)

respect need the mercy of God to pardon its imperfection; then carry it to God, and say, "Here Lord is a work, in which thou thyself canst not find a flaw; it is as perfect as any that my Lord and Saviour himself ever performed, and is therefore worthy to be united to his infinitely meritorious obedience as a joint ground of all my hopes. I am content to stand or fall by this one work. I am aware that, if it is imperfect, it stands in need of mercy for its own imperfection, and consequently can never purchase pardon for all my other offences; but I ask no mercy for that; yea rather, I claim on account of it all the glory of heaven." (p. 78, l. 13.)

NOTE 21.—to p. 58, l. 23.—"own merits"—Let any one only read Mr. Simeon's sermon on Justification by Faith, and then let him candidly ask himself, whether it would not lead him to suppose that, with the exception of those who have adopted Mr. Simeon's sentiments, the clergy of our Church have universally discarded the doctrine, that the merits of Christ are the sole principle, and fundamental cause, of human salvation; and whether he does not uniformly speak of it as a doctrine no less unknown in this age and country, except to the enlightened individuals of his own persuasion, than it was to the philosophers of Athens before the Christian era. This is the intimation, which the whole tenour of his argument is calculated to convey, and we cannot therefore but consider the discourse, which contains it, as a most unfounded misrepresentation, from first to last, of the opinions of his brethren in the Ministry; and so much the worse for being made, not openly and plainly, but covertly and by implication; and so much the more indecorous from being addressed, *under that form*, to a congregation consisting in a great degree of clergymen. How therefore Mr. Simeon can say, (as he does in his Preface,) in reference to such a sermon as this, that "he delivered his sentiments rather in a way of apology for himself, than of hostility to others," we cannot comprehend; for is it then no act of hostility to the clergy to tell them, that they have all deserted their duty, and corrupted the Gospel with which they were entrusted; and is not Mr. Simeon perfectly aware that an act of hostility may be committed just as effectually, (and sometimes rather

more so,) in the dark as in the day—by secret and circuitous operations, as well as by a direct attack? He *might* have known, and he *must* have known, if he has ever condescended to listen to *unevangelical* sermons, that we are quite as far as himself from teaching that men may “*purchase* salvation;”—(p. 72, l. 23, and p. 73, l. 12.) from authorizing any one to say, concerning his justification, “I have procured this unto myself;” (p. 74, l. 10.)—or from explaining the doctrines of justification and salvation in such a way as to “blend our fancied goodness with our Redeemer’s righteousness,” (p. 81, l. 2.) and to be chargeable with “the ingratitude, of rejecting Christ’s salvation,” of “turning our backs upon his righteousness, and trusting in one that is no better than a foundation of sand.” (p. 82, l. 2 and 16.) We entertain, no more than Mr. Simeon does, the impious imagination that our Saviour’s merits are an insufficient ground of justification, nor have we yet arrived at such a pitch of insanity, as to set about planning ways and means for “eeking out the insufficiency of those merits.” (see note 20.) We place, as well as himself, our whole hopes of salvation in the mercy of God, through the merits of Christ, and *in no respect* on the merit of our own good works; but we inculcate the *necessity* of good works, because God has told us that, *without* them, even the merits of Christ shall eventually profit us nothing. We heartily wish, however, that Mr. Simeon had in this case, (and indeed in some others, see notes 15 and 33,) acted up to the spirit of those equitable cautions, which he has himself given in the following words: “To be fully persuaded in our own minds after a due course of diligent enquiry, is well; but to brand persons with opprobrious names, because they see not with our eyes, and to *misrepresent their sentiments, putting into their mouths statements which they never make, and loading their real statements with consequences which they disavow and abhor,\** is a mode of proceeding, which tends only to generate

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\* That is, when they are not fair, and genuine, and necessary consequences.

endless contentions, and to destroy that love which is the sum and substance of all true religion." (p. 12, l. 15.)

NOTE 22.—to p. 59, *last line*.—"redemption."—Hence we have no controversy with Mr. Simeon on the argument instituted under the first head of his discourse, as far as it is concerned in proving, that the merits of Christ are the sole meritorious cause of our justification, whether primary or final, and that faith is the only medium, through which we can apply and appropriate those merits to ourselves; but we have to regret, that his reasoning is extended to a much greater length, and made to serve a very different purpose, as we shall see more fully in the next note.

NOTE 23.—to p. 64, l. 30.—"conditions of Salvation."—Mr. Simeon not only makes no distinction between the different senses of the words "Justification" and "Faith," and thus leaves an opening for all the misapprehensions suggested in the text, but he tells us plainly, repeatedly, and in so many words, that nothing *whatever* is required, except faith, for the attainment of salvation. Nor can he possibly explain away the force of these assertions, by alledging, that he has here used the word faith in its more *large* signification, so as to comprehend under it, the whole summary of Christian duty, and therefore, good works as well as belief; because, in this same sermon he has *contradistinguished* faith, (according to his sense of it,) from the good works which it produces, (p. 75, l. 21, and p. 76, l. 15,) so that by "faith," abstractedly taken, he can only mean "belief:" indeed, in the outset of this discourse he regularly defines faith to be "a simple reliance on the promises" of the Gospel, "and on Christ, as revealed in them." (p. 58, l. 14.) This being premised, let us now produce some of the passages in which he positively declares, that salvation may be attained by faith only.—"We are saved entirely by the exercise of faith in him (Christ,) or, in other words, by transferring our guilt to him, and looking for mercy through his all-atoning sacrifice." (p. 64, l. 10.)—Again: Mr. Simeon says, the Law was promulged "to constrain us to seek for salvation by faith alone." (p. 62, l. 22.) He proceeds thus: "this is what we

are expressly told by an inspired Apostle ;” (viz. in Gal. 3. 19—24,) and then, in order to prove his point, he cites these five verses, and prints in Italics the concluding sentence of them as the main authority on which he rests his position :—“ the Law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” To the same purport he says : (p. 68, l. 15.) “ We will also mention the striking reproof, which he (Paul) gave to Peter for countenancing, by his dissimulation, the idea that *something besides faith* in Christ was necessary to *salvation* ; “ knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal. ii. 16.) And again : (p. 73, l. 21.) “ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law ; ye are fallen from grace.” (Gal. v. 4.)—The epistle, from which all these texts are taken, was written against the Judaizers, who contended that obedience to the Mosaic law was the only meritorious ground of acceptance with God, and the only means of attaining that blessing : the Apostle on the other hand affirms and proves, that Christ is the only meritorious cause, both of justification and salvation, and that “ faith which worketh by love” (Gal. v. 6.) is the only means of procuring an effectual interest in his merits. But whether St. Paul considered it, (as Mr. Simeon supposes he did,) an impiety to maintain that something besides “ a simple reliance on the promises,” and a “ transferring of our guilt to Christ,” is necessary to salvation, we need go no farther than this very epistle to be convinced, in the conclusion of which he gives his converts these solemn admonitions : “ Be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man *soweth*, that shall he also *reap*. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in *well doing*, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,” (Gal. vi. 7, 8, 9.) As a farther evidence of Mr.

Simeon's opinion on the present subject, we may cite the following passage: "if we consider salvation as entirely by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the grace of God is indeed magnified beyond all the powers of language to express.... But let man be required to purchase this salvation, either in whole or in part, by any works of his own, and who does not see how the grace of God is lowered"? (p. 72, l. 10 and 23.) But cannot God require good works of his creatures without those works being the *purchase-money* of salvation? and, if he can, (as he assuredly may,) salvation is equally a free gift on his part, and therefore, his grace is just as much magnified, on the system of Mr. Simeon's opponents, as on his own. From the same neglect of distinguishing between good works as the condition, and as the meritorious cause of salvation, Mr. Simeon shortly afterwards falls into the following similar paralogism: (p. 73, l. 10.) "St. Paul tells us, that if *any* thing were required on our part towards *purchasing* of salvation, salvation could be no longer of grace, because the two are contrary to, and absolutely inconsistent with, each other." "If, (says he,) salvation be by grace, then is it no more of works." (Rom. 11. 6.) Now, supposing St. Paul *had* said so, his assertion would have been of no use to Mr. Simeon, for it would have done nothing towards disproving the necessity of good works as the *means*, though not the *price*, of salvation. But the fact is, the Apostle says nothing of the kind; his words are "ἐκ χάριτος, οὐκ ἐκ ἔργων," and Mr. Simeon has most conveniently supplied a nominative to the sentence without a shadow of authority. The *real* one, to be extracted from the preceding sentence, is *ἐκλογὴ*—the election—of the believing Jews to the honour of still continuing God's people, though under a different dispensation from that to which they had been formerly subject; and thus, while the Apostle only means to declare, that their introduction into the Christian covenant was solely attributable to the mercy of God in Christ, Mr. Simeon would fain make him appear as a preacher of modern evangelicism, and accordingly introduces him, in strict conformity with that character, as undervaluing the importance of good works.

—We have seen then by abundant testimonies from Mr. Simeon's "Appeal," that, in his opinion, salvation may be attained by faith only; and we have also seen that "faith," according to his use of the term, can signify nothing more than "belief." He brings a variety of passages from Scripture, which he uses in proving, indiscriminately, sometimes that we are *justified*, and sometimes that we are *saved*, by faith only. We have considered some of them, and it is quite unnecessary to examine more, because those of them even, which are most to the purpose, only prove, what is admitted on both sides, that good works are never the *meritorious cause* of salvation; but not one of them has the most remote tendency to disprove the necessity of good works as a *condition* of salvation, the only question between us.

Of the texts, however, which refer not to the meritorious cause, but to the conditions of salvation, and which, therefore, militate against his opinions, Mr. Simeon has candidly enough produced two, which, though by no means the strongest that might have been chosen, are yet sufficient of themselves to settle the matter in dispute. The force of the first he apparently makes no attempt to evade; he attacks the second, but in a point where it is invulnerable, and his weapons only rebound upon himself. Let us shew the truth of these assertions. Mr. Simeon first mentions (*p. 65, l. 22.*) the question of the young man to our Saviour: "what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life;" and our Saviour's reply: "if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;" (*Matt. 19. 16, 17.*) which Mr. Simeon paraphrases thus: "come and follow me in all that I command you, and you shall gradually be guided into all truth." We will admit the accuracy of this interpretation, provided the words "all that I command you," are intended to include, (as we suppose they are,) the duties of morality in general, as well as those which are more peculiarly Christian; and that the "guiding into all truth" implies the attainment of salvation, which indeed it necessarily *must* do, for otherwise it would have been no answer to the young man's question. This passage, therefore, as

explained by Mr. Simeon himself, at once overthrows his own doctrine, for it proves decidedly, in direct opposition to Mr. Simeon's statement, that something besides faith in Christ is necessary to salvation. Nor has Mr. Simeon a word to say against this conclusion; his only remark on the objection started by himself, is this: "the command, which he immediately gave the youth, to go and sell all that he had, and look for treasure in heaven, put his sincerity to the trial; and shewed him, that, notwithstanding the anxiety he professed to learn the way to life, he was more attached to his wealth than to his Saviour and his God." Now all this is very true, but nothing whatever to Mr. Simeon's purpose. Why he should have cited a text at all, which directly contradicts his own sentiments, and then have left it just as he found it, is not for us to determine; but such is the fact in the present instance.—Another very formidable opponent of Mr. Simeon is St. James, who tells us that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (2. 24.) Now, if a man cannot be justified without works—(it matters not, for our *present* purpose, in which of its senses we use the word "justify," though the context plainly determines in which it *ought* to be taken :) he certainly cannot be *saved* without works. This is indeed the very point which the Apostle's argument is designed to establish, and he asserts it in the strongest terms a few verses before, by asking: "what doth it profit, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works; *can faith save him?*"\* How then does Mr. Simeon encounter this plain refutation of his opinion? Let us hear himself: "St. James is writing to some who *said†* that they had faith, but had no works to support that claim. These he tells, that their faith was dead, and no better than the faith of devils. He declares to them that, as it would be to no purpose to profess compassion for a fellow-creature, when at the same time we

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\* The Apostle here manifestly uses the word "faith," in the same sense as Mr. Simeon, that is, for "belief."

† Mr. Simeon also prints this word in Italics.



made no effort to relieve his distress, so it is in vain to profess faith in Christ, if we shew not forth our faith by our works." (p. 69, l. 3.) Mr. Simeon then evidently means to deny, that the persons, on whom St. James was animadverting, *had* faith; but here again he is contradicted by the Apostle, who fully *admits* that they *had* faith, for he reasons about it, and he could not reason about a non-entity; and he compares it to the faith of devils, which is undoubtedly a *real* faith, though a very *useless* one. Nay, he even supposes that this faith of theirs was *correct*, for he commends it, and produces one article of it which is *so* correct, that it forms the ground work of all true religion. (see verse 19.) The original assertion of the Apostle therefore, concerning the necessity of good works to salvation, remains unshaken; nor can the deficiency in point of *practice*, which he censures and condemns, be possibly construed to mean a deficiency in point of *faith*, to prove which, however, is the whole scope of Mr. Simeon's argument; for if, as he would represent the case to be, the Apostle required good works, only to "*shew forth*" *faith*, then it was, virtually and in fact, not *works* but *faith* which he required, and which he considered as deficient.\*

NOTE 24.—to p. 66, l. 13.—"However let us" . . . "hereafter," p. 68, l. 32.—The whole of the character here given, as generally applicable to evangelical discourses, is correctly that which belongs to those of Mr. Simeon, contained in his "Appeal;" but the particular reason for laying down that character in the text, namely, that it might serve as a ground for determining the sentiments of our evangelical brethren on the requisites for salvation, is, in the case of Mr. Simeon, entirely superseded by his own express declarations, which were minutely detailed in the preceding note.

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\* This favourite theory of our opponents is examined more at large in the text, (see p. 69, last paragraph, &c.) and some farther observations will be offered upon it in Note 28.

5.—to p. 68, l. 1.—“condition of salvation.”—Acas  
 Simeon, throughout the whole of his sermon on  
 v Faith, has most religiously abstained from  
 condition, as in any respect applicable to good

38, l. 22.—“qualification for salvation.”

God is glorified by them, and that the  
 they spring, constitute our meetness  
 e?” (p. 76, l. 19.)

l. 10.—“to use it.”—Mr. Simeon

, that, with regard to the saints of old,  
 principle by which they were actuated, and the  
 which all their obedience sprang.” (p. 76, l. 1.)—

Mr. Simeon had here gone one step farther, and told us  
 plainly, that faith is the principle which suggests *motives* for  
 obedience, he would have given us a just and rational account  
 of the practical operation of faith, which is usually described  
 in evangelical writings, as producing good works by a certain  
 necessary and mysterious process, quite incomprehensible to  
 all but the initiated, and perhaps not very intelligible even to  
 them. (See note 30.)

NOTE 28.—to p. 70, l. 2.—“evidences of faith.”—This  
 is the grand purpose, to which Mr. Simeon appears to con-  
 sider good works as subservient, and he accordingly places it  
 first in the list of the uses to which they may be applied.—  
 “What, (he asks,) if the works it (faith) produces be not to  
 be relied on for our Justification before God? Is it nothing  
 that they will be adduced in the day of judgment as the evi-  
 dences of our love to Christ?” (p. 76, l. 14.) And when, in  
 commenting on the decisive language of St. James, (see  
 note 23,) he does not venture absolutely to deny the necessity  
 of good works; the only reason which he gives for their being  
 required at all, is the same as in the last instance: “We must  
 give by our works, an *evidence* that our faith is genuine, for in  
 any pretensions, which we make to a saving faith, it is by our  
 works that we must be justified, (or proved upright,) and not  
 by faith only.” (p. 69, l. 17.) The Apostle does certainly

speak of good works as being evidences of faith, but only to men and not to God. He says, in the person of a man addressing another: "I will shew thee" (*thee*, one or any one of my fellow-creatures,) "my faith by my works." (James 2. 18.) but he places their *necessity* on a very different ground, namely, because by them only "faith is made *perfect*," (v. 22.) or efficient to salvation. Some other reasons indeed are afterwards suggested by Mr. Simeon for the performance of good works, which will be more properly discussed in a future note. (31.)

NOTE 29.—to p. 74, end of note.—Mr. Simeon appears to have imbibed a still more vehement antipathy to sincerity, for he says: "alas! those who stand upon their own sincerity, are little aware of the deceitfulness and wickedness of their own hearts, and, if they would but look back throughout their whole lives, they would find that their sincerity, like that of Saul of Tarsus, *has only stimulated them to a greater measure of inveteracy against the Gospel of Christ.*" (p. 79, l. 19.) If by "the Gospel of Christ," Mr. Simeon here means that which has been vaunted as such, peculiarly and exclusively, by certain religionists during the last half century, his assertion respecting the effect of sincerity, may be not quite so outrageously incredible, as any one, at first, would pronounce it to be.

NOTE 30.—to p. 75, l. 5.—"necessary consequence."—What was here stated only as an hypothesis, is converted into a fact by Mr. Simeon's own acknowledgment, for he positively asserts of faith, that "*it will work by love,*" and "*overcome the world,*" and "*purify the heart.*" (p. 76, l. 13.) These affirmations are made up certainly of Scriptural expressions, but put together in a very different manner from that in which they are combined in Scripture. Thus, for example, one Apostle tells us, that the faith which availeth in Jesus Christ, is one "*which worketh by love:*" (Gal. 5. 6.) and immediately Mr. Simeon goes and writes it in a book, that faith *will* work by love. Another asserts, that "*this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith;*" (1 John 5. 4.)

and hence Mr. Simeon concludes, that faith *will* overcome the world. And lastly, a third declares, that God had accepted the believing Gentiles, "purifying their hearts by faith;" (Acts 15. 9.) from which Mr. Simeon infers, that faith *will* purify the heart. In short, he argues, that because, when these spiritual habits *are* wrought in Christians, faith is the cause of them, therefore faith *will necessarily* produce them, an argument, which has been already analyzed in the sentence of the text following that to which this note refers. That faith, if duly cherished and exercised, will produce these effects, is indisputable; but we have it *also* on the authority of an Apostle, that faith, even *true* faith, *may* subsist *without* them, (James 2. 19, 20; see also the latter part of note 23, and the text, p. 75, l. 15.)

NOTE 31.—to p. 77, last line.—"given us to do."—Though the doctrine, openly avowed by Mr. Simeon, that nothing else but faith is requisite for the attainment of salvation, manifestly excludes the necessity of good works for that purpose, yet in one place he has expressly undertaken to shew, how his system "secures the performance of good works." (p. 75, l. 4.) He regrets, (and so do we,) that he was unable to devote more time than he has to the execution of this department of his subject, which we must be allowed to think is left exceedingly incomplete. However, let us briefly examine what he *has* done towards proving his point. He gives four reasons, which he contends will furnish abundant motives for the performance of good works, which reasons are—that good works "will be adduced in the day of judgment as the evidences of our love to Christ:"—that they will form "the measure of our everlasting reward:"—that "God is glorified by them;"—and that "the dispositions from which they spring, constitute our meetness for the heavenly inheritance." The first of these reasons we have shewn to be founded in mistake, (see the text, p. 70, l. 19.) and therefore incapable of supplying any motives whatever, either to this effect or any other. From the second and fourth of them, we allow very cogent arguments may be extracted for the necessity of good works, but then the *original*

reasons themselves, from which those arguments are to be deduced, are totally inconsistent with the grand position of Mr. Simeon's sermon, that nothing else than faith is required for salvation; those two assertions on the one side, and this position on the other side, are mutually contradictory of each other,\* and consequently cannot be both maintained by the same person in the same argument; and therefore, as Mr. Simeon is under the necessity of rejecting either one or other of them, we suppose he would rather relinquish those two assertions, concerning the nature of good works, which are only introduced casually and in a secondary way, than the great, fundamental doctrine, which he inculcates throughout the whole of his sermon, and which it was solely written to establish, namely, the all-sufficiency of faith. Consequently, the second and fourth of the reasons, which he assigns as motives for the performance of good works, must, on his system, go for nothing. The only reason, therefore, which remains, why good works ought to be practised, is, that "God is glorified by them." This consideration, when firmly believed

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\* Which may be very easily shewn. For, first, if good works, are to be "the *measure* of our everlasting reward," our reward will be *proportioned* to our good works; therefore, if our good works amount to nothing, so likewise will our reward; and consequently, as there is no future state intermediate between those of reward and punishment, good works are necessary to salvation, that is, something else than faith is required for salvation.

Again—If there be a certain "meetness" required for heaven, this meetness must be a *qualification* for heaven. Now this meetness, according to Mr. Simeon, consists in certain dispositions, which he contends will inevitably produce good works; (see note 30.) therefore, if good works are *not* performed, it will follow, on his own principles, that those *dispositions* are wanting which constitute our qualification for heaven. Therefore, if *good works* are wanting, our qualification for heaven is wanting; that is, good works are necessary to salvation, or something else besides faith is required for salvation.

and carefully attended to, will doubtless operate as a motive to Christian conduct, but with very different degrees of strength in different cases. It will animate and encourage those, who are *already* good, to a further progress in the ways of holiness; but it will suggest only a feeble incentive to those, who are languid and indifferent to religion; and it will be utterly inefficacious in deterring the wicked from sin: and we confess that Mr. Simeon must in this instance think much more favourably of human nature than we do, if he supposes, that in *any* case a lively sense of gratitude to God, *independently* of a concern for our own everlasting interests, will be sufficient to ensure the performance of the duties enjoined by the Gospel.—But the fact is that, according to Mr. Simeon's opinion of the requisites for salvation, God is *not* glorified by the good works of his creatures, but quite the contrary, for Mr. Simeon elsewhere gives us to understand that God is glorified, in the gift of salvation, in exact proportion to the worthlessness and wickedness of the objects of his favour. In proof of this allegation let us once more recur to his own statement: "If, (he says,) we consider salvation as *entirely* by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the grace of God is indeed magnified beyond all the powers of language to express: . . . . a bestowing of this salvation freely, without money and without price, even upon the very chief of sinners, is such a stupendous work of grace, that it fills all heaven itself with wonder. But let man be required to purchase this salvation, either in whole or in part, by any works of his own, and who does not see how the grace of God is lowered? We will grant, for argument sake, that the giving of salvation on *any* terms would have been a wonderful display of grace; but, as compared with that, which is revealed, it would have been no grace:\* . . . . we may say of such a *mutilated*

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\* In this argument then it is necessarily implied that no terms *whatever*, in the article of good works, are annexed to salvation on the scheme of the gospel. Here, by the way, we may perceive another instance of the marvellous inconsistencies of evangelical opinions. Divines of that description exclaim most vociferously

gospel\* as we are speaking of; "it might be glorious; inasmuch as it would be an exercise of mercy, but it would have had no glory, by reason of the infinitely brighter display of divine grace in the Gospel, as it is revealed to us." (p. 72, l. 10.)

And this, it seems, is the system which, above all others, "requires the performance of good works;" and truly by a very singular method—by proclaiming, that is, that they are perfectly *unnecessary*, since a certain gospel has been "revealed" to Mr. Simeon, which, without asking any thing but faith, offers to bestow freely—(freely on the part of *men* as well as of God,)—not only primary justification, but *salvation*, even upon the very chief of sinners. Well, therefore, may Mr.

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against the admission of good works as a condition of salvation, on the ground of such admission being derogatory to the free grace of God; and yet they allow, and strenuously contend for, the indispensable necessity of *faith* as a condition for the same purpose: not observing, all the while, that the requisition of *faith* as a condition of salvation, is just as derogatory to the free grace of God, as that of *good works* can be, supposing that the free grace of God in the gift of salvation *could* be diminished by any such means at all. Hence therefore by merely substituting the word "faith" for "good works" in this argument of Mr. Simeon, we shall have another, precisely similar, and equally just and conclusive, the whole strength of which will be turned against himself; as may be illustrated by taking one paragraph of it, which will run thus:—"but let a man be required to purchase this salvation, either in whole or in part, by any *faith* of his own, and who does not see how the grace of God is lowered?" In short, for the same reason that Mr. Simeon gives up *good works* as one of the means of salvation, he must also give up *faith*; and his own reasoning, when pushed into its proper consequences, will thus prove that nothing *whatever* is required of man for the attainment of salvation, (Something more to the same purport as this note, may be seen in the text, p. 72, l. 11.)

\* That gospel, it must be understood, which declares good works to be necessary to salvation.

Simcon give, (as he does in his hymn-book,) the following poetical invitation to his hearers :

"Come needy and guilty, come loathsome and bare,  
Though lep'rous and filthy, come just as you are,"\*

\* As the reader may not often be fortunate enough to meet with such a choice morsel of evangelical minstrelsy, as is exhibited in this hymn, we will favour him with a few more stanzas. The subject of it professes to be, "The fountain opened for sinners;" and the virtues of this fountain are extolled, (whether in poetry or prose it may be difficult to say,) but certainly in terms very similar to those, which compose the newspaper-puffs of patent medicines. It runs in the following strain :—

This fountain from guilt not only makes pure,  
And gives soon as felt infallible cure,  
But, if guilt removed, return, and remain,  
It's power may be proved again and again.

This fountain unceas'd stands open for all  
Who long to be heal'd, the great and the small :  
Here's strength for the weakly that hither are led,  
Here's health for the sickly, and life for the dead.

This fountain, though rich, from charge is quite clear,  
The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here ;  
Come needy and guilty, come loathsome and bare,  
Though lep'rous and filthy, come just as you are.

This fountain in vain has never been tried,  
It takes out all stain, whenever applied ;  
The fountain flows sweetly with virtue divine,  
To cleanse souls completely, though lep'rous as mine."

(Hymn 118.)

Similar sentiments are elsewhere expressed in the same volume, amidst all the charms of similar versification, and in rather stronger language. Of the Redeemer of mankind, (to whom, by the way, in hymn 134 the following reverent address is offered,

Jesus, how precious is thy name,  
The great Jehovah's Darling thou" !)

*I have not the first edition of Hymns to hand*

*"Come needy and guilty, come loathsome and bare, come just as you are."*



if, the worse they are, and the worse they remain, the more the grace of God will be magnified in their salvation. Indeed on Mr. Simeon's principles, taking them even in the most *favourable* point of view, a person might reason with himself most correctly in the following manner:—"if I have faith, good works will necessarily follow: (see note 30:) and, if I have *not* faith, no good works, I can do, can supply the deficiency;" either part of which alternative will equally lead to the comfortable conclusion that Christians may sit down with their arms folded, and do just nothing for themselves, or, if they please, *worse* than nothing.—It is true Mr. Simeon says in one place that "a justified person is not at liberty to neglect good works;" (p. 59, l. 10.) but men *will* act according to the motives which are set before them; and it is in vain, therefore,

it is said, in hymn 59, that

"With power he rules, and wonders performs;  
Gives conduct to fools, and courage to worms,  
Beset by sore evils without and within,  
*By legions of devils, and mountains of sin.*"

The title of this hymn is "Encouragement for the weak;" may we not add—"and for the *wicked*."—But the mode of salvation, according to Mr. Simeon's opinion, is described still more minutely as follows:

"This is the way I long have sought;  
And mourn'd because I found it not;  
My grief, my burden long has been,  
Because I could not cease from sin.

The more I strove against its power,  
I sinn'd and stumbled but the more;  
Till late I heard my Saviour say—  
"Come hither, soul, I am the way."

Lo! glad I come, and thou, blest Lamb,  
*Shalt take me to thee as I am;*  
My *sinful* self to thee I give;  
*Nothing but love shall I receive."*      *Hymn 142.*

to tell them they are not at liberty to be idle, when at the same time, you studiously destroy every motive proper to excite their diligence.

Thus much then for Mr. Simeon's proof that his doctrine *peculiarly* "secures the performance of good works."

In confirmation however of the truth of the main point insisted on in this sermon, the sufficiency of faith to salvation, Mr. Simeon lays down certain "marks which characterize the Gospel," (p. 72. &c.) and these are—that "it magnifies the grace of God"—that it "cuts off all occasion for boasting"—and that it "secures the performance of good works;" and, having laboured to shew that they are all attributable to his own scheme, he concludes in the following triumphant terms: "these then are *clear evidences* that the way of salvation is *precisely* such as *we* have declared it to be; for there is no other doctrine *under heaven* that has these marks connected with it, or these effects proceeding from it." (p. 77, l. 9.) This is speaking pretty confidently: but, by way of tempering this exuberance of self-gratulation, we would beg leave to remind him, that the system of his opponents on this question has these marks connected with it, quite *as much*, (to say the *least*), as his own has.

NOTE 32.—to p. 81, l. 25.—"other points"—There is however a sentence in Mr. Simeon's sermons, which savours so strongly of this doctrine, that we cannot refrain from pointing it out to the notice of the reader." Being justified, (he says) by faith in him, (Christ,) you shall have peace with God: you shall "be kept also from falling" whilst in this ensnaring world, and in due time you shall be "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (p. 82, l. 26.) Here then salvation is made a *necessary consequence* of primary justification.—One farther observation may be made on this passage. We have no objection to the method, sometimes pursued, of occasionally introducing into sermons texts of Scripture in the way of *accommodation*, and without paying a rigid regard to the meaning they originally bear, provided it be

done in *sincerity*, and in a way which can give rise to no deception. But we have seen Mr. Simeon's opinion of sincerity, (note 29,) and, if we can only imagine him to have been in sober earnest when he gave it, we ought to be the less surprised that in this quotation he has made St. Jude join in asserting a doctrine, which in all probability he never heard of—that of Final Perseverance. The Apostle's words in the doxology of his epistle are merely these: "now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless." (v. 24.)

NOTE 33.—to p. 92. l. 20.—"words of man."—The description, given in this paragraph, of certain characteristics of Mr. Simeon's sermons, is, it must be confessed, not very flattering; but really, on examining those theological documents with considerable attention, we still think that it was neither unmerited nor misapplied. We have already seen, (in notes 13, 14, 15, and 21,) the unceremonious manner in which Mr. Simeon has handled one of the most sacred ordinances of our Church, and the tacit, but not on that account the less real attack, which he has made upon all its ministers except those who coincide with himself in opinion. For the purpose of substantiating another charge, which we believe to be the only one, of those we have made, not yet sufficiently verified, we shall present the reader with a few specimens of the "candour," towards those who differ from him, which Mr. Simeon has manifested in his "Appeal to men of wisdom and candour;" and there will be found moreover, in these instances of his liberality to others, a tolerable degree of self-complacency on his own part. For the more ready elucidation of these panegyric effusions, we shall also, (in the form of occasional notes,) subjoin a *glossary* of some of the terms and phrases which occur in them; and, as to the accuracy of the interpretation we have put upon these passages, we have no hesitation in saying that, however ingeniously they may be twisted and tortured, they can, in the end, admit of no other.

In one place, then, Mr. Simeon joins with Socinians and such sort of people, those who deny "the necessity of a renewed

heart,"\* and of all these persons he asserts that they are "blinded by prejudice or passion." (p. 14, l. 19.)—But similar declarations crowd upon us so fast that we cannot prefix a preface to each of them, and the reader must therefore be content to take them, (according to a technical term in Mr. Simeon's theology,) "just as they are."

"We regret that we have not time to make any observations on this passage, but whoever will read it attentively will find that *every word* we have uttered is confirmed by it beyond the power of *sophistry*† to set aside." (p. 70, l. 22.)

"Verily, if we make no better use of the explanations given us in the New Testament, than to *refine and cavil, and obscure the truth*, we had better go at once and learn of a poor ignorant Jew; for there was no Jew so ignorant but, when he saw that rite performed, could tell you in what way his iniquities were to be forgiven. And, if only we will bear in mind that ordinance, we may defy all the *sophists*‡ upon earth." (p. 64, l. 13.)

"You, who will dispute against salvation by faith only§, and who wish to have something of your own to found your hopes upon, do this, &c." (p. 79, l. 2.)

"That a learned and ingenious man may involve the plainest subjects in obscurity, and may maintain even the most *palpable absurdities*|| with somewhat like a *plausible* course of argument, is well known to this audience, who are habituated to investigate theories of every kind. But the Scriptures are written for the

\* That is, according to his notions of it.

† "Sophistry"—any train of arguments opposed to Mr. Simeon's tenets.—"Sophists"—any persons who use such arguments.

‡ "Sophists"—see "Sophistry."

§ This is an elliptical sentence, and, when properly filled up, will stand thus:—"You who will (have the hardihood, in opposition to Mr. Simeon, to) dispute against" &c.

|| "Absurdity"—in Mr. Simeon's vocabulary it is equivalent to "delusion," which see in the next quotation.

poor, and it is a fact that the poor do understand them, whilst the *vain disputers of this world*\* are bewildered in their own mazes, and, by the just judgement of God, are taken in their own craftiness." (p. 67, l. 24.) †

"Now you can speculate, and dispute, and speak with confidence of the justness of your views; . . . but, if you hold fast any of the foregoing *delusions*,‡ you will not find them so satisfactory in a dying hour as you imagine. Doubts like these will arise in your mind. "What if my fancied goodness, *which I am blending with my Redeemer's righteousness*, should prove a refuge of lies?"§ (p. 80, l. 21.)

"If we look to fact and experience, who are the persons at this day that are accounted righteous over much; and are represented as making the way to heaven so strait that none but *themselves* can walk in it? Is it among the *declaimers* about good works that we must look for those persons? No, but among those who renounce all dependence on their own works, and seek for salvation by Christ alone." (p. 76, l. 25.)—Hence, as "what every body says *must* be true," we learn demonstratively these two things:—first, that all Mr. Simeon's opponents are very wicked;—secondly, that he, and those who think with him, are all very good.

But Mr. Simeon is not contented with anathematizing his antagonists in his own proper person and authority; he employs

\* Namely, Mr. Simeon's opponents.

† This is the passage referred to in the text, (p. 92, l. 15,) and that no part of its beauties may be lost, it may be remarked that the phraseology of it was originally used by the Apostle Paul in reference to the captious and perverse philosophers of the schools of Greece, who opposed the Gospel when preached by *himself*: of course, then, it is here applied by Mr. Simeon with singular felicity, propriety, and accuracy, to describe the character of such persons as call in question the correctness of his *own* opinions.

‡ "Delusion"—any doctrine not to be found in Mr. Simeon's creed.

§ "Lie"—whatever Mr. Simeon does not believe.

a much more tremendous engine to hurl them to destruction, and actually introduces the sovereign Judge of the world as dealing out, at the last day, a sentence of eternal condemnation on all who dare to dispute the accuracy of his tenets.—“It is an easy matter, (he says,) to adopt an opinion, and to maintain it in opposition to the most convincing statements;\* but we cannot change the truth of God, nor, when we have passed into the eternal world, can we come back to rectify our errors. We may laugh at the new birth, and persuade ourselves that we have no need to be alarmed at the declarations of our Lord Jesus Christ in relation to it, but we cannot make him open the kingdom of heaven to us when once the door is shut; we may knock and say, “Lord, I thought my baptism was sufficient;”† but he will say, “Depart, I never knew you: my words were plain enough‡ if you had *desired* to understand them, but you did not *choose* to let go your *beloved lusts*; you did not *choose* to give yourselves up to me in newness of heart and life, and therefore *you would believe any lie* rather than comply with my word:§ depart therefore, and reap for ever the fruit of your own delusions.” (p. 54, l. 23.)

It is quite impossible to go beyond this, and here therefore we shall end our quotations, conceiving that the object, which was proposed in citing them, is by this time abundantly answered. We cannot however conclude, without offering Mr. Simeon one parting caution, which is, that, if he should ever hereafter be called upon by his opponents, (as they are by him,) to “bring forth,” in “justification” of himself and his opinions, “a work”—“one single work”—and “one that has no defect,”—he would not produce *that*, which he has just published, “An appeal to men of wisdom and candour,” for it does not appear

\* Such as are made by Mr. Simeon, that is.

† A speech very kindly prepared by Mr. Simeon, and put into the mouths of his opponents. (see note 15.)

‡ Especially with Mr. Simeon's comment.

§ As interpreted by Mr. Simeon.

to be entirely "perfect" even in principle, and still less in spirit. But, to be serious on a serious subject—it is indeed to be deeply regretted that a person, who can speak so reasonably and charitably, as Mr. Simeon does,\* on the maintenance of moderation and candour in the management of religious enquiries, should in his own example, and almost in the same breath, have completely violated all the rules, for the observation of which he so properly contends: but it is one thing to inform others how they ought to act, in reference to *ourselves*, and another to conduct ourselves towards *them* conformably to such advice.

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\* See note 21.

THE END.





